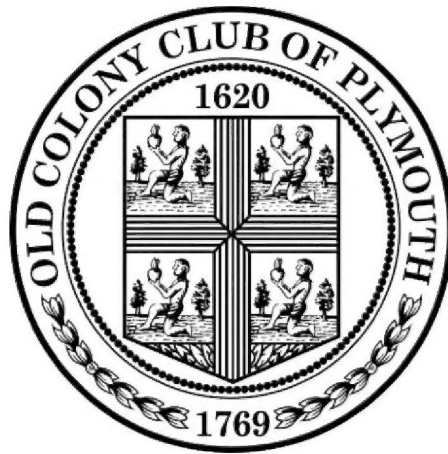


Old Colony Club

Plymouth, Massachusetts



Occasional Papers 1990-1996

**Prepared by Club Historian
James W. Baker**

Old Colony Club Occasional Papers 1990-1996

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OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 1

September, 1990

INTRODUCTION TO THIS SERIES

Although the Old Colony Club is primarily a social organization, it has had from its foundation in colonial days a strong affinity for the pursuit of history. This may at first suggest the wellknown chronicle of the Pilgrims (and it is they who are duly honored each Forefathers' Day), but the Club has been equally dedicated to the subsequent history of the Town of Plymouth and its inhabitants. The interest in the latter can be found in the reminiscences and conversations of the membership, as well in the famous collection of photographs that grace the walls of the Club. The other area of historical concern is naturally enough the story of the Club itself.

The Club has accordingly appointed official historians from time to time, such as Fred A. Jenks (who was made the first historian in 1933), Paul W. Bittinger and L. Joseph Bradbury, who have greatly benefited the organization through their efforts (although I have yet to find what Mr. Bittinger accomplished). When I agreed to accept the position of Club historian in January 1990, I realized that this tradition was a lot to live up to. It is implicitly incumbent upon the historian to accomplish a serious study on some aspect of Plymouth or Club history, which I see as a long term project. However, history need not be only the hard stuff it can also be light and of general interest. In the interim, therefore, I would like to attempt an irregular historical "newsletter" (perhaps quarterly?) which can be sent to the members and will hopefully prove entertaining as well as informational. I am quite willing to take suggestions for topics which could be covered, and if anyone has any specific questions on the Pilgrims or Plymouth history, I will do my best to answer them in these Occasional Papers. I would also like to print any interesting Club reminiscences by members who might supply me with notes on the same.

The obvious areas of interest are, as I indicated above: 1) the Pilgrims, 2) Plymouth History, and 3) Club History. To this I would like to add another related topic, the Social Culture of the Gentlemen's Club. In addition to embodying the tradition of the Pilgrims and the history of our town, I feel that the Old Colony Club is the representative of a noble but fading culture epitomized by traditional clubs (beginning in England) found throughout the English-speaking world. Our Club, first founded in 1769, was a early and typical example of these. I would like to alternate these general topics as the whim takes me, and optimistically produce some articles which may be of interest.

In this issue, I would like to cover two topics of Club history. The first, in response to a query by Mr. Talcott, is on the curious affair of the international organization of Old Colony Clubs that came to light in 1927. The second is on a subject of my own interest - the story of the Cigar and its once honorable role in Gentlemen's clubs such as ours.

OLD COLONY CLUBS ??

In October, 1927, the Old Colony Club was surprised to hear that another organization had applied to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for incorporation as "The Old Colony Club", in Boston. Upon investigation, it turned out that there existed an extensive network of business service clubs which went by the name of "The Old Colony Club, Inc.!" President George Simons talked with a representative of this hitherto unsuspected plagiarist group (which had apparently been equally unaware of the existence of the original Club), and received a letter describing the rival organization. Mr. Albert Flower of Boston explained that "... we have approximately 48 Clubs in the United States, Canada, England, France, Germany and Mexico that are all operating under the control of Old

Colony, Inc., a Delaware corporation, and the Old Colony International Inc., a New York corporation. The Boston organization, which we are proposing to incorporate we wish, subject to your approval, to name the Boston Old Colony Club, Inc., which we believe is sufficiently different from your name, Old Colony Club, to avoid any possible error..." Mr. Flower went on to offer the full privileges of Old Colony Clubs, Inc., to any active member of the original Old Colony Club, in exchange for reciprocity at Plymouth for their members (and a letter to the Secretary of State of Massachusetts allowing them the use of the name).

The Executive Committee agreed and duly sent the requested letter. It sounded like a very good deal, and the Club went so far as to suggest to Associate members (such as Benjamin Fox of Boston) that they might very much like to advance their membership from Associate to Active to take advantage of this windfall. O.C.C., Inc. also had a magazine and it was suggested early in 1928 that an article on the real Old Colony Club might be of interest. However, Mr. A. J. Norton, the President of O.C.C., Inc., decided to postpone the appearance of the article, and thereupon, died! A. J. Norton was apparently the glue that held the organization together, and as if to demonstrate that all of this was too good to be true, O.C.C., Inc. quickly began to wither away. By September 1928, the national organization in New York had been "discontinued". Most of the constituent clubs became inactive, except for a few (such as in Dallas, Texas, Syracuse, N.Y., or Montreal, Canada) who formed a sort of rump organization, and the old O.C.C., Inc. became the Greenwich Colony Clubs (!) headed from Topeka, Kansas. Old Colony Club Secretary Warren Strong noted that this was all very new and interesting, and said that Plymouth would continue to extend privileges as originally agreed to surviving parts of O.C.C., Inc.

In 1929, the Boston O.C.C., Inc. suggested a continuing cooperative

agreement, but inadvisably assumed the real Old Colony Club to be identical to the other service clubs, which got a reply from Mr. Strong that Plymouth was "... not interested one way or another in any of these suggestions." Correspondence from the Texas Executive Service, Inc. in 1931 shows that there were 4 surviving O.C.C., Inc. clubs under the old name, and 7 affiliated clubs in the U.S., plus the Old Colony Club itself. Texas also sent a sample membership card and brochure.

The last contact with O.C.C., Inc. in 1931 was from the English branch in London, which sent an intriguing booklet and apparently an invitation to visit the club in Leadenhall St. What happened to these other Old Colony clubs after 1931 is a mystery we may someday find the answer to, but the correspondence ceases here.

CLUBS AND CIGARS

Among my various enthusiasms, cigars hold a place of honor. Although it is a widely disparaged habit in these regenerate times, I still greatly enjoy the sensuous pleasure of a good cigar. Cigars, as we shall see, are also very much a part of the tradition of Gentlemen's Clubs, and one of the many indulgences suspected (and resented) by those who are not members of this distinctly masculine culture. Bill Sykes and Tom Brewer were telling me the other night that the air in the Old Colony Club used to be blue with the effusions of cigars, and that there was until recent memory a box of cigars made available at the bar for members. The innumerable surviving ashtrays give mute evidence to changing fashion and the vanished popularity of the weed. *D'autres temps* and all that!

I can understand the reluctance of people today to indulge in what is now *asserted* to be a dangerous habit for not only the habitué but also his neighbors, analogous to those concerned with such things as obliging all and sundry to partake of, say, Russian roulette. However, the association of cigars with clubs such as

ours has a long and fragrant history, which deserves some recognition. The history of Gentlemen's clubs and the cigar are also coeval in time; both were widely adopted in the early Nineteenth century, hit their Golden Age between 1880 and 1930, and have receded today before the pressures of fashion and other indulgences.

Cigars themselves existed before Columbus, and were seen by his men in their explorations. They became popular in Spain at an early date, but were largely unknown in northern Europe and North America where pipes and snuff were preeminent until after 1800. One reason for this was the quality of the tobacco available to these areas. Spain, with its monopoly on the Caribbean trade, imported a high quality leaf which was mild enough to be made into cigars, while the tobacco raised to the north was more suited for snuff or in pipes. Although cigars gained popularity in England only after the return of soldiers after the Peninsula Campaign (1814), New Englanders were introduced to the "brown rolls" in Revolutionary times. General Israel Putnam helped usher in the cigar with the importation to Connecticut of three donkey loads from Cuba in 1762. Farmers in the Connecticut Valley had been growing tobacco since the 1640s (using the same seed as the West Indies plantations), and they now began to roll homemade cigars from their crops. For a generation or so, these primitive cigars had a low reputation; tavern keepers used to keep a keg of them to give away to patrons. It was about this time also that cigars were introduced into Pennsylvania, where Conestoga lent it name to the "stogie" as well as the Conestoga covered wagon.

The cigars of the West Indies, especially those from Cuba, were far better than these early North American attempts. The production of cigars was an art thoroughly understood by the Cubans. Tobacco husbandry was and is a very demanding chore. As one Cuban said, one becomes wedded to the crop rather than just employed to raise it. The first

step to growing a high quality leaf begins with the seeding of the dustlike seed in carefully prepared beds protected by straw (and/or cheesecloth) from the elements. These seedlings are then transplanted in rows, kept quite weedfree and carefully tended by hand to remove all suckers, buds and pests. The leaves are removed as they ripen, from the lowest through six levels to the "corona" or uppermost heart of the plant. These are then bunched in "hands" and taken to the barn for initial drying. After the individual leaves are threaded in long strings and placed on long poles to "sweat".

Once properly wilted, the leaves are cut free and put in piles for up to three years, after which they are packed to be aged in cedar barrels for two months. From here they are removed and dried, then pressed into bales and sent to the grading shop. The bales are carefully separated and made into bunches which go through a careful process of selection by size, color and texture (the graders in Cuba use 40 to 50 different graduations). The sorted and bunched leaves are then put in fermentation stacks about the size of a cord of wood.

It is only after this that the actual processing of cigars begins. The bunches are sent to the factory where the leaves are separated and dampened to allow them to be handled. They are then stripped of their midribs (50% of the ribs if it is to be used for filler, 25% for binders and all the ribs for the outer wrappers). There are 18 to 20 classes of wrapper leaves alone. It is now that the cigarmaker culminates the process. Contrary to the old myth, these cigars were never "rolled on the thighs of beautiful Negresses/ that rolled them up as amid caresses" - this was a fictional extravagance by Prosper Mérimée, and the first woman roller, in 1878, was white. Anyhow, the roller (he or she) takes the half-leaf of the binder and rolls the filler core in it on a board, applies the fine outer wrapper (smooth side out) and fastens it with a little gum tragacanth, forms the perilla or tip, and cuts the cigar to the proper length at the

other end. The veins in the leaf determine whether the product is a "drecho" or right-handed cigar, or a "zurdo" (left-handed roll).

By 1810, such Cuban methods and concerns for quality were imported to mainland America and the old "two-fer" (two for a cent), a thin stringy cheroot, was replaced with a better product. Also the demand for good cigars in the urban markets increased. There was even a "smoking circle" set aside for the newly popular smoke on Boston Common before the Civil War. Imports from Havana also increased as cigar sophistication grew. The Civil War saw a marked increase in consumption, and the cigar gained the upper hand over other tobacco products in fashion if not use in the Gilded Age that followed.

Stylish gentlemen enjoyed cigars, native or more likely imported in their clubs, while other men visited the Cigar "Divans" (sort of elevated coffeehouses dedicated to cigars).

"With elegance and comfort,
cheaply won, -
To cheer the spirits and to
refine the man:
Hail! books and mocha,- cigars
and the divan!"

Henry James Meller (1832)

Neither the stereotyped "masher" or man-about-town of the period (later caricatured as the typical "curses foiled again" villain with the fancy dress, top hat and mustachios of the '80s and 90s) or that other caricature of the time, the bloated capitalist, was ever without his cigar.

Their use began slowly even in the clubs, where usually at first a single room was set apart for smoking. By the end of the 19th century, the position was reversed and there were only a few spots where men could escape the general fumes. "After due allowance has been made for a few minor restrictions... the fact remains that smoking has triumphed

socially all along the line in Club-land. We have travelled far from the days when a committee man could declare that "No Gentleman smoked to a time when, for example, the large smoking room at Brooks is one of the finest rooms in one of the most famous and exclusive of clubs." (G. L. Apperson, 1914)

However, tobacco and smoking, then as now was subject to a good deal of attack by reformers, especially by women, out as usual to "improve" their menfolk. By the end of a century of often suffocating "improvement" by the gentle sex and their allies, many men were more and more inclined to flee the overheated parlours and resort to the club, poolhall or saloon (depending on class and inclination). The latter two of these refuges became the targets of the frustrated reformers and branded as gateways to Hell! The club, although the attack was muted, was also subjected to ridicule and disparagement. Nevertheless, the pleasure of cigars was often indulged in these bastions when the weed had been banished from "polite" society.

The subject of cigars was raised at the Old Colony Club in 1876, the second year of its resurrection, when Arthur Lord proposed that a box of cigars be made available for sale to the members. (It should be noted that there was a rule against intoxicating liquor throughout the time we will be dealing with. Members needed some comforts.) As the Club grew, it paralleled the growth of both cigar and cigarette usage. In 1916, the Club went so far as to purchase a professional cigar case (18" x 40") in which to display and sell tobacco products from Charles B. Perkins Co. of Boston. It must have been popular, for in January of the year following it was found necessary to put a lock on the case. The Perkins Company also suggested an assortment of products ranging from pipe tobacco to cigars costing from .05 to .25 each. The first order was for 100 *Ginita Londres Especiales* (3 to a foil package at .25 each), 50 *Mi Favorita Cabinet* (.15 or 2/.25), 50 *Corona Belvederes* (.20 or 3/.50); 24 packages (of

10 each, such as were found recently under the floor of the upstairs bathroom) of cigarettes: *Rameses*, *Three Deities*, *Fatima*, *Natural*; and a dozen boxes each of *Dills* and *Edgeworth* pipe tobacco, "both cut plug and ready rubbed." Enough to blue the air of any club!

But this was only the beginning. From 1917 to 1922, the peak years of cigar consumption the Club carried on a considerable tobacco trade, of which Mr. H. E. Mabbett was in charge. I will concentrate on cigars, but should mention here that cigarettes soon outstripped the popularity of their expensive kin. The Old Colony Club bought cigars from three different firms: Chas. B. Perkins, S.S. Pierce and Cummings & Cummings (New Bedford), apparently to accommodate some members preference in brands.

To give some idea of the scope of the club enterprise, I will use 1917 (the best documented year) as an example. Beginning with a few orders in December 1916 for 400 cigars from Perkins and Cummings & Cummings, the trade fully expanded during the next year. Twenty orders throughout the year resulted in the purchase of 7,325 cigars, 8,000 cigarettes (in packages of ten) and 60 boxes of smoking or plug tobacco.

The Club gave up Perkins and did most of its business with S.S. Pierce, with orders to Cummings & Cummings (totaling 1,800 units) for one brand of cigars - *La Nacondas*. The most popular S.S. Pierce brands were *Overland Puritanos* and *Overland Express*, of which 2,300 of the former and 2,850 of the latter were ordered. Smaller orders were made for *Carolina Perfectos* (125), *Corona Belvederes* (100), *R & G Deliciosos* (50), *Larranaga Belvederes* (50) and *Larranaga Symbols* (50). The *Larranagas* were among the very top quality of the imported Havana cigars. In cigarettes, the top brand, with orders for 4000, was *Egyptian Deities #3*, with *Murad*, *Natural*, *Rameses* and *Mogul* for lesser amounts. These were quality cigarettes as well - a package of ten *Egyptian Deities* cost .30

while a pack of twenty *Lucky Strikes* cost only .18!

Such orders turn up in the Club records in 1918 but after there are fewer records but enough to indicate that sales continued at a brisk rate until 1931 at least. There was even a shortage with resulting correspondence in 1919 because of a strike among cigar manufactures.

Although the Club appears to have favored national brands, this was a time when it is estimated there were at least 100,000 small "Mom and Pop" cigars manufacturers across the country. Brand names also ran into the thousands. Giffy gave me a clue on the ubiquity of these small producers when his prodigious memory came up with the Thompson and Barnes cigar "factory" was right here in Plymouth on Market Street. Following up on his tip, I discovered that there had been several producers (in addition to retailers) of cigars here in Plymouth. In 1887, Henry M. Stuart (47 Main St.) and Martin Curley (26 Market St.) were making cigars locally. In 1893, Samuel P. Eddy was turning out cigars at 24 Market St., Stuart was still on Main St., and William H. Gardner worked at 19 Court St. Mr. Eddy continued at one address or another until at least 1907, when Frank Thompson and George Barnes were at the 42 Market St. location Giffy remembered.

Today the cigar holds something less than 5% of the U.S. market, and it has disappeared from the Club. Nevertheless, once the air was laden with the aroma of good cigars and it is not quite yet time to write their final obituary.

MY LAST CIGAR

The mighty Thebes and Babylon
the great,
Imperial Rome, in turn, have
bowed to fate;
So this great world and each
particular star
Must all burn out, like you,
my last cigar:

A puff - a transient fire,
 that ends in smoke,
 An all that's given to man -
 that bitter joke -
 Youth, Hope, and Love, three
 whiffs of passing zest,
 Then comes the ashes and the
 long, long rest.

Henry James Meller (1832)

Next Issue: Pilgrims and the New England
 Christmas, Was There an Earlier
 Plymouth Colony? and more.

J.W. Baker, Club
 Historian

HOW TO TORTURE YOUR WIFE





OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 2

December, 1990

WELCOME TO OUR SECOND ISSUE

I trust that the first issue has met with your general approval. As before, I am ready to undertake suggestions for topics and areas of interest that you, the membership, would like to see. One idea that I have had is that the Papers could be the repository for the biographies of our past presidents both as they occur (say, in each March issue for the incumbent of the previous year) and for those presidents who took office after Brad's original collection. In time we could add these to a updated edition of that collection. What do you think? Another inquiry: after the article on cigars in our first issue, I was told about the old cigar cutter that used to sit on the stand in the TV room -- but is now missing. Any memories or information as to its whereabouts?

We are about to set up a glass showcase, through the generosity of Roger Randall, which is intended for the display of Club relics and memorabilia. In other words, we need some of the latter to put on display in our new case. Loans of interesting items, pictures, documents or whatever would make an attractive (changing) exhibit are requested.

ARE WE PLYMOUTH COLONY NO.2 ?

Perceptive readers of William Wood's *New England's Prospect* (1634) are sometimes surprized to see on the crude accompanying map that while the settlement of "New Plymouth" is in the correct place, there is also an "Old Plymouth" shown in the neighborhood of Narragansett Bay! There is no explanation or mention of this other Plymouth in the text, and we might assume that it is an isolated error. However, there is another 17th century reference to "old Plymouth", which would

indicate that there was some basis for Wood's identification. In a chronological appendix to John Josselyn's *Two Voyages to New -England* (1673) there is an entry under 1607; "Plimouth Plantation in New-England Attempted", which the modern editor of the book neglects to gloss with a footnote.

It would appear then that there may well have been an earlier Plymouth in New England that failed to either survive or even turn up in contemporary records beyond those that we have cited. There were two chartered companies created in 1606 by the English Crown for the settlement of "Virginia", that is, the English claims in America between 34° (Cape Fear, North Carolina) and 45° (Bangor, Maine) north latitude. One was the Virginia Company of London, which was to establish settlements up to 41° (New York City), while the other was the Virginia Company of Plymouth (of Plymouth, Devonshire) which had (overlapping) authority north of the 38° parallel. In 1606, the Plymouth Company sent Martin Pring to what is now New England, and got a good report of the area, including the Plymouth vicinity. In 1607, they sent two vessels (the *Gift of God* and the *Mary and John*) under George Popham with 120 men (including two Indian guides) who established a colony at Sagadahoc in Maine. This settlement only lasted a year and was then abandoned. Whether some offshoot of this colony was started in southeastern Massachusetts or not, we will never know, but the intriguing colony of "Old Plymouth" remains a curious mystery.

CHRISTMAS ON THE ROCK

Thanksgiving has become for much of the country the starting-post for the holiday season spending race, with everyone rushing about to unload their cash before Christmas. While we are fortunate to have the focus of Thanksgiving on our town and shops, public interest dissipates even before the turkey is digested and the commercial stream moves swiftly on towards Santa Claus. Local merchants and cultural organizations have looked longingly at the pull of the Christmas season and tried to think of a way to get in on the action with campaigns such as "Christmas By the Sea." Images of the seductive and sentimental "YE OLDDE CHRISTMAS" featured at Colonial Williamsburg and other historic sites causes some Plymouthans to rather wish that our ancestors had more thought for their descendants and been a little less puritan and a great deal more Dickensian.

Unfortunately, history doesn't always give us the support we want, any more than the future does. In the case of Christmas, Plymouth shares with the rest of New England the Puritan rejection of all the Christian holidays that lack biblical justification. This meant that Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and all of the Saints' days were regarded as later adaptations from pagan prototypes and studiously ignored by our immigrant ancestors. Not just ignored, actually, but actively repudiated and forbidden.

The most graphic example of this occurred in 1621, when Plymouth had its first run-in with the Christmas spirit - and Christmas lost. Christmas 1620 saw only the beginning of construction of much needed shelters, with a little seasonal cheer offered by Master Jones who provided beer for those aboard the Mayflower (but none for those working ashore). Apparently all those who came on the Mayflower were predisposed to slight Christmas to this extent. The often exaggerated division into "Saints" (the Leyden Separatists) and "Strangers" (other passengers recruited in England)

ignores the fact that many of the latter were of Puritan sympathies. Men such as Christopher Martin and William Mullins had had previous troubles with the ecclesiastical courts just as the Scrooby Pilgrims had (although not as seriously). It was only with the arrival of 35 men aboard the *Fortune* on Nov. 9, 1621, that the dominant rejection of Christmas was challenged.

Some of the *Fortune* immigrants retained a desire to celebrate Christmas as they always had and Gov. Bradford (who recognized that repression often results in violent reaction) gave into them. In his own words: "On the day called Christmas Day, the Governor called them out to work as was used. But the most of this new company excused themselves and said it went against their consciences to work on that day. So the Governor told them if they made it a matter of conscience, he would spare them until they were better informed; so he led away the rest and left them. But when they came home at noon from their work, he found them in the street at play, openly; some pitching the bar, and some at stoolball and such like sports. So he went to them and took away their implements and told them that was against his conscience that they should play and others work. If they made the keeping of it matter of devotion, let them keep to their houses; but there should be no gaming or reveling in the streets. Since that time nothing hath been attempted that way, at least openly."

The Separatists and the Puritans agreed that Christmas was pagan rather than Christian in origin, that December 25 was most certainly not the date of Christ's birth but rather the adapted birth of the Sun god (preceded by the notorious Saturnalia), and that there was no warrant for good Christians such as they, who were trying to live up to God's Commandments for a True Church, to have any truck with a licentious holiday that had been invented by the papist church. They knew that Christmas had not been recognized by the Church until the Fourth Century.

They were also opposed to play when there was work to be done, for while there were "lawful recreations" suitable for certain occasions (such as the "First Thanksgiving"), these were good as exercise for the body or the mind and not mumming, frivolous sports such as football or, worse, games of chance which mocked God's Providence with their use of luck or lots. The only religious holidays allowed by these pious folk were Sabbaths, Days of Fasting and Humiliation, and Days of Thanksgiving.

The latter two days had to be declared contingently, in response to God's Providence, and never as automatic or regularly recurring celebrations. This meant that a community declared a Fast Day or a Thanksgiving only in response to events which could be interpreted as an indication of God's favor or displeasure with His people. When things were going poorly -- wars, famines, outbreaks of crime or other calamities, the Pilgrims saw themselves as guilty of some offence before God and declared a Day of Fasting to repent and examine their hearts (and behavior) to see why God was giving them such a message, so that they might obviate the offence. Conversely, when everything was going swimmingly, victory had been achieved over the Indians or whomever, or the long-awaited ship came in, then this was seen as a mark of favor from God that deserved a special day of devotion and rejoicing. In each case such holidays were held during the week (never on Sunday, as they were in the Catholic and Anglican churches), and usually on "Lecture Day" (Thursday) which was commonly set aside for afternoon sermons anyhow. The day was celebrated by church services and (for Thanksgivings) dinner afterwards.

Christmas had no place therefore in their deliberations. In Boston it was actually outlawed during the Commonwealth period under Cromwell (1659), but this act was belatedly repealed after the Restoration, in 1681. It was during the Restoration and after that Christmas, having experienced a revival in

England where it had been outlawed as well (the English government raided an illicit Christmas service in Exeter chapel in 1657), began to sneak in. At first it was just celebrated by the wealthy and more secular Episcopalians, but in time other people began to observe the holiday. Sturdy old Puritans such as Samuel Sewall felt a glow of satisfaction when they could see work as usual going on Christmas Day, and seethed when shops were closed and services attended in the name of Christmas. In cosmopolitan centers such as Boston, there was some acceptance of the holiday among the more progressive (even Cotton Mather preached a Christmas sermon in 1712), but generally Christmas was ignored.

If New Englanders felt the need of a winter holiday, they had Thanksgiving, which during the late 18th century had become a regular if not automatic November holiday. It was still declared separately each year, and part of the joyous anticipation was to await the public announcement of each year's Thanksgiving day. It may in fact have been a strong factor in the enthusiastic acceptance of our own Forefathers' Day was that it could act as a standin for the missing Christmas Day!

Although Christmas enjoyed a revival in England (and elsewhere in the American colonies) after the Restoration, it failed to regain its old strength for some time. Even in Anglican Virginia, the holiday got short shrift. The Williamsburg Christmas with its elaborate decorations and other observances is quite ahistorical; an invention of the 1930s that gained such popularity with visitors that it remains a strong feature of the museum community today.

In England, "Merrie Old Christmas" suffered a similar eclipse. Although holidays were celebrated fairly generously during the 18th century, the Industrial Revolution seems to have had a distinctly dampening effect. In 1761, there 47 Bank holidays in England. In 1825,

there were still 40 legal holidays in the year, but by 1834, only 4 remained! By 1840, only Christmas remained, and it was under threat from not only the commercial Scrooges of the day, but also the poor workers who could little afford a payless holiday. Dissenters (not only the predecessors of our Fundamentalists but also the Quakers and even the rational Unitarians) decried the frivolous and raucous celebration of Christmas. It was at this time, however, that the tide began to turn.

The revival of Christmas celebrations (as opposed to church services alone) in England was, at its base, the work of the nostalgic Antiquarian interest in the past enjoyed by the early Victorians for the Middle Ages and Elizabethan times as well. Merrie England led inevitably to Merry Christmas! Writers such as Sir Walter Scott, Charles Lamb and, ironically an American -- Washington Irving -- began a counter attack to the trend with their portrayals of Ye Olde Christmas celebrations, usually set in the great country houses where such old customs had survived here and there. Irving was like many Anglophiles enamored with the and traditions of England that flourished before the rise of Industry. In his book, *Bracebridge Hall* (1822), he creates an idyllic portrayal of the true old English Squire and his house, and an old-time Christmas was a central feature of the story.

The real change occurred through the good offices of Charles Dickens and Prince Albert. Dickens gave an inviting picture of Christmas at Dingley Dell in *The Pickwick Papers* (1837), and in 1843, published his classic *A Christmas Carol*. Albert introduced the German Christmas tree to the Royal household in 1840. These events tapped an underlying swell of sentiment that made them immediately popular, and "the new Christmas was carried forward," as J.A.R. Pimlott notes in *The Englishman's Christmas* (1978), "by an irresistible momentum."

It was in the mid-1800s that New England finally began to relent and share Christmas with other Americans and English people. Washington Irving had introduced Santa Claus to American children in his *Sketch-Book* (1820), but it was Dutch traditions he drew upon, not Yankee ones. His fellow New Yorker, Clement Moore, wrote the classic "A Visit From Saint Nicholas" for his children in 1822, but he only published it in 1844, as Christmas popularity grew apace. Longfellow said in 1856 (when Christmas became a legal holiday in Massa-chusetts) that "We are in a transition state about Christmas here in New England. The old Puritan feeling prevents it from being a cheerful hearty holiday" and Theodore Parker noted in 1859 that Christmas for a New England country town was a strange and fearful event.

Once this turn-around began, the holiday became widely popular. Within a generation, Christmas was accepted as if it had always been part of the New England scene. Fiction created "traditional New England Christmases" even as the memory of its nonadherence remained among the older generation.

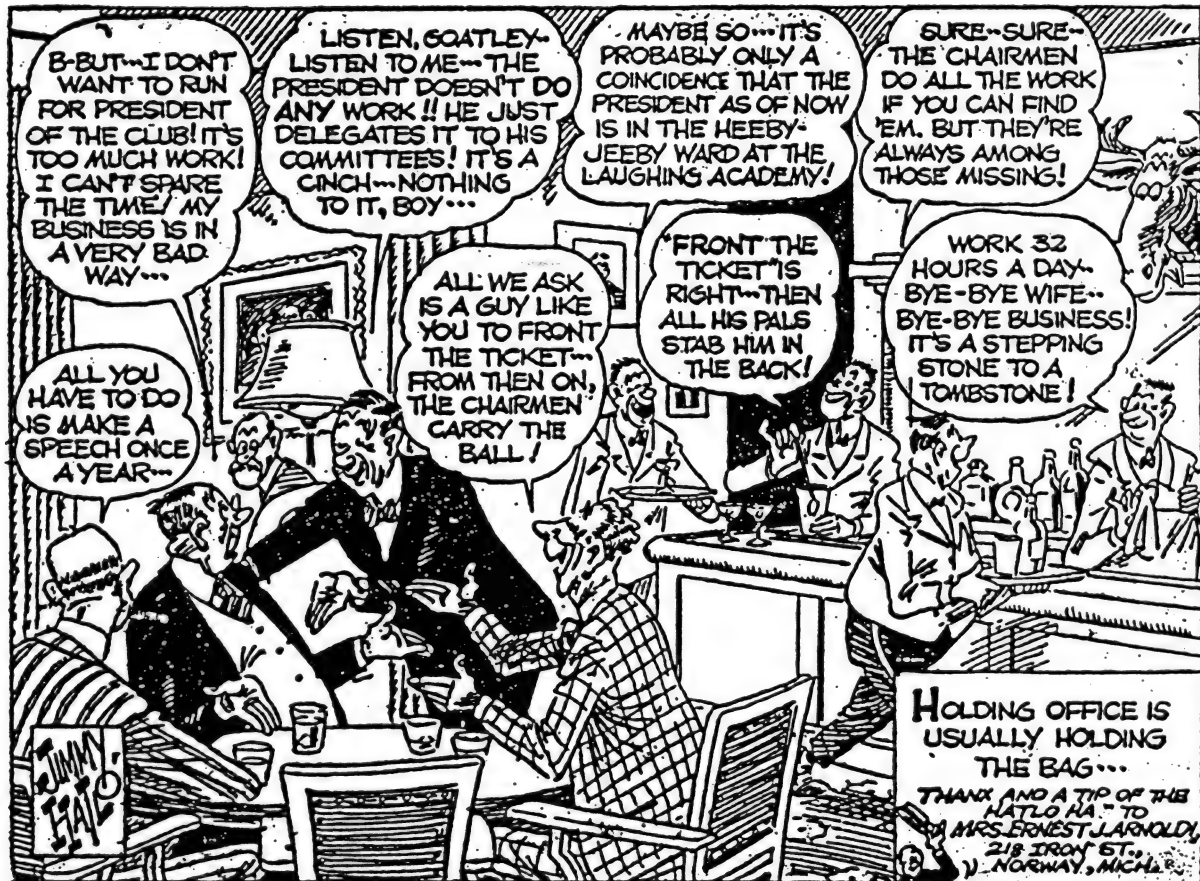
Here in Plymouth the full effects of the Christmas revolution took some time, but eventually took as strong a hold as elsewhere. W. T. Davis (born in 1822 and OCC President 1876) describes the changes in his *Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian* (1907): "Christmas during my day [before the Civil War] came and went without observation or notice. It was not a holiday, presents were not exchanged, schools were kept, and the wish for a 'Merry Christmas' was never heard... With regard to Christmas I am inclined to think that it observance has found its way through its appeal to the aesthetic rather than the religious sense of the people [of Plymouth]."

Today, as we sometimes lament the commercialization that detracts from even the aesthetic pleasures of the holiday, there is often a lament for a "good old fashioned Christmas." As New

Englishers, we should be glad that we do not have to endure the non-Christmas of our predecessors.

Next Issue (March): Outgoing President Bob Rohr's biographical entry, The history of the Old Colony Seal, Billiards and More at the Old Colony Club.

J.W. Baker,
Club Historian



Its Christmas Again!



OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 3

March, 1991

NEWS AND NOTES

Forefather's Day 1990 saw a modification in the traditional route of the Dawn March. When the event was revived in 1956, the route I am told was to cross to the Court House Green for the firing of the cannon, then to proceed with band, flags and membership down Court Street to Shirley Square and along Main Street to Town Square, and back again. As of 1981, the cannon was also fired in Town Square from in front of the Unitarian Church, before everyone returned to the Club.

This had a certain symbolic importance as it was apparently in front of Old Colony Hall (now about the rear of the small public parking lot on Market St.) where a cannon was first fired to begin the Forefathers' Day festivities of the Club in 1769. Incidentally, this may very well not have occurred at daybreak, as was the case in 1770, at the second Forefathers' Day commemoration. The second time it was done by the young men of the town, not the Club members, who got together at the more leisurely hour of 10:00 A.M.

After the accident last Fourth of July attracted the notice of our ever vigilant bureaucracy, the rules were changed. This Forefathers' Day (which was also unprecedentedly warm - in the 50's!) the company marched down a damp Court Street to Shirley Square, then turned east down North Street and on to Carver Street. Stopping just south of Massasoit, the cannons (Bob Holton, Grey Perry and Walter Shobbrook) took the cannon to the edge of Cole's Hill, and fired it out towards the harbor to cheers and the reading of the Commemorative Exercises. There was scattered applause from the hardy few (non-members) who had come to see the ceremony, then the company returned to the Clubhouse for a fine breakfast and the raising of the flag.

The symbolic fitness of the new site can be found in the fact that it was there on Cole's Hill that mainland Plymouth's last fortification was erected during the Revolution, in which the old cannon from the Pilgrim's Fort-Meetinghouse were installed. After the war, Thatcher says (p.138), the cannon were sold as "refuse iron" to a forge in Bridgewater.

MORE COLONY CLUBS

In response to the article in our last number (November 1990) about the discovery of many other "Old Colony Clubs", I received a letter from Carl Faulkner who has found a "Colony Club" in a very out of the way place - the Farmland Islands! I doubt one in a ten thousand Americans had even heard of the Falklands before the British-Argentine war a few years ago, and almost no one has actually gone there - but Carl and Marilyn have! Carl was there as a guest of the British Government, and came across this club which he was able to visit (on a non-meeting day): "I found the interior to be remarkably similar to our house in every respect -

A once-a-week Dinner;
Elections by white balls and black cubes;
Pictures of the Past Presidents and [the]
local historic seaport;
A upstairs room with a billiard/pool room;
A card room..."

As Carl goes on to point out, the Falklands (758 of them!) were on the main New England - Orient (and whale fisheries) run, and some were named for New Englanders, especially from Nantucket.

I expect that the similarities stem from common Men's Club precedents from England that influenced both the Farmland Colony Club and our Old Colony Club, but one never knows. Thank you, Carl, for your intriguing letter and picture of the club building. Rather than try to reproduce the latter as a photocopy, I will post it on the Bulletin Board to coincide with the mailing of this issue.

THE FLYING CLOUD MODEL

I was asked by Grey Perry and Roger Randall to discover the origin of the ship model of the clipper Flying Cloud that resides in the glass case near the bar. I had intended to ask the membership if anyone had any memory of who

gave it to the club and when, but on going through a scrapbook compiled by Dexter Brooks, I found a note (c.1950) to the effect that the model had been built by a prisoner at, I presume, the County Farm, who had given it to Sheriff Charles H. Robbins, who in turn donated it to the Club "about 20 years ago." As Sheriff Robbins was president of the Old Colony Club in 1930, it is quite possible that he presented the model during or just after his term of office.

THE PLYMOUTH COLONY SEAL

I expect that all of you are familiar with the Plymouth Colony Seal that has been used for generations as a symbol of the Old Colony Club, as well as by the Town of Plymouth, the Pilgrim Society and other Plymouth organizations. I gather, however, that its origin is a bit hazy to most members, so I would like to discuss (as far as is known) the seal and its significance.

To begin, there isn't much information available about the seal. As far as I can ascertain, the only account of the seal is given by William S. Russell in the 1855 edition of Plymouth's first guidebook, *Pilgrim Memorials* (first published, without the seal note, in 1846), p. 220. He observes that the first intimation of a seal is in a 1624 letter from Robert Cushman to William Bradford, in which Cushman advises that the colony "make [its] corporation as formal as you can, under the name of the society in Plymouth in New England." The acquisition of the seal most likely followed the receipt of the 1629 "Warwick Patent" which implicitly granted the use of a official seal in New Plymouth.

Russell goes on to quote Samuel Davis' description of the seal: "The Old Colony arms, four men kneeling, implumed hearts in their hands, on a field quarterly, was its head ornament; legend, *Plymouth Novanglia, sigillum, societatis, 1620*." The original seal was taken from the archives during the Andros administration (1686-88), and the Colony never got another made before Plymouth was absorbed into Massachusetts Bay in 1692.

The best example of the seal available in the 19th century was a reproduction engraved for Nathaniel B. Shurtleff's published edition of the Plymouth Colony Records, which was copied from one illustrated in "the oldest extant copy" of the printed Plymouth Colony Laws (either the first edition of 1671, or because of the way it is phrased, the second of 1685). A copy of this law book, by the way, was carried by the members of the Old Colony Club in the 18th century Forefathers' Day processions.

It is entirely speculative on my part, but I wonder whether the heraldic hearts held by the four men are not "enflamed" rather than "implumed". Such hearts are used in heraldry, as Randle Holme informs us (*Academy of Armourie*, 1688) to denote the reception of the Holy Spirit, as in Acts 2:3,4 ("and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost..."), and is certainly a congenial symbol to Puritans who expected the indwelling of Grace in New England hearts.

At any rate, once the seal was published by Shurtleff (1855), it was borrowed widely and not least by the Old Colony Club. One further note — because of the ubiquity of the seal, I was moved in the spirit of variety to use a different Pilgrim image for the new Reading Room bookplate. I found a room-ticket (for reserving rooms for the night at the Club in the 1870s) in a Club scrapbook (made by Dexter Brooks) which used a small engraving of the Pilgrims' Landing. This same cut is found on a dance card for a Forefathers Day about the same time (They had women at the earliest Forefathers' Day dinners, in the 1870s!) Using this precedent, it is this alternative picture that is on the bookplates.

PAST PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: ROBERT E. ROHR 1990

Bob Rohr, one of the Club's true gentlemen, was born on March 27, 1915, to Joseph and Jessie (Edmiston) Rohr. He lived in Brunswick, Maine, until age 8, when the family moved to Westport, Connecticut. He graduated from Bowdoin College in 1937, and worked as a chemical engineer for the Texaco Company. Bob entered the U.S. Navy in 1941 and served in Bomb Disposal until 1944. He then served as commanding officer in the Underwater Demolition Team until the end of the Second World War. He was called back into the Navy in 1950, when he acted as Ordnance Officer in Navy Headquarters in Italy.

Bob retired as owner of the Martha's Vineyard Insurance Agency in 1988 which he joined after he left the service, and is active as an EMT in the Vineyard Haven and Edgartown ambulance service. He married Phyllis Hammarstrom on July 15, 1946, and has six children. Now living on Woodlawn Ave, Vineyard Haven, he enjoys his hobbies of sailing and gardening, and seldom misses a meeting of the Old Colony Club nor regular visits with superannuated members of the Club, ferries and other obstacles notwithstanding.

BILLIARDS AND THE MEN'S CLUB CULTURE

In the first issue of the *Occasional Papers*, I discussed the topic of cigars at length, as one of the traditional elements of the "Culture of Men's Clubs", a tradition that the Old Colony Club embodies as thoroughly as any posh London establishment. I was struck with the number of records dealing with cigars, and, similarly, with those regarding billiards. However, since I greatly enjoy cigars, but have almost no experience with billiards, I decided to save that topic for a later paper.

The game of billiards (and I shall include both pool which does, and American billiards which does not, use the six pockets under this term) is of hazy origin, as are most games. It may have originated in England, or France, or even Italy. It seems clear, at any rate, that a game resembling modern billiards did appear in England and France during the 15th century. It apparently evolved as an indoor version of lawn bowls, and replaced shovelboard as a indispensable game for the mansions of the rich in Elizabethan England. There are billiard tables in the inventories of wealthy houses of the time, such as Howard House (1588), and among the Earl of Leicester's goods at Wanstead in the same year. Billiard rooms are noted by Polsky¹ at the country houses of Burgley House (1598), Bramshill (1612), Knole (1608), Hatfield House (1611) and Dorton House (1626). As with so many games, billiards began among the wealthy and respectable and only later trickled down the social scale and became notorious, as we shall see.

The game in the early days was rather different from the one we are familiar with. The board was then oak, with boxes or nets for pockets. At one end there was an arch of ivory much like a thick croquet hoop, and at the other end a tall tapered ivory peg called the "king". The sticks, called masts or "maces" were rather like little field hockey sticks, although straight cues were known as well.

Although grand and unfounded statements have been made in amateur histories of the introduction of game to America, such as claims that the Spanish introduced it to St. Augustine in 1565, the first real evidence begins to appear only at the end of the 17th century. Polsky notes that one of the first indisputable references to an American billiard table is from the diary of wealthy William Byrd of Westover Plantation in Virginia: "... in his diary entry for 30 July, 1710,

Byrd writes, apropos of having laid his wife [sic], "It is to be observed that the flourish was performed on the billiard table"² - which reveals quite a bit about Virginian habits of the time in other ways as well!

It was the evolution of the cue, which had generally replaced the mace by 1810, that resulted in the modern game. The early cues had flat wooden tips that made it quite difficult to get anything but a direct hit to be effective. At the end of the 18th century, the tip was first rounded and then in 1807, the leather covering was added and the use of chalk introduced.

This was vital to modern shooting as now glancing side shots could be controlled by the player. The side shot itself was discovered by a fellow named Bartley who owned a billiard establishment in the Upper (Assembly) Rooms in the fashionable resort of Bath, Somersetshire. It was his assistant, one John Carr, who perfected the shot and amazed everyone with his ability to control the ball. From this time, modern pool and billiards quickly evolved, paving the way for the golden age of billiards that occurred in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

While the upper classes respectably played billiards at home or in their club rooms (as in the case of the Old Colony Club), an aristocratic tradition continued throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the game attracted quite a different reputation among the population at large. Billiards and pool entered common life first through public tables in taverns and inns, and later evolved into independent pool rooms. They quickly developed such a dubious reputation that even President John Quincy Adams was castigated for introducing "gambling furniture" into the White House when he installed a gentlemen's billiard table in the 1820s.

As Polsky observes, poolhalls and billiards were firmly associated by middle class morality with gambling and various forms of low life from an early date, despite their introduction from the upper classes of the Old Country. Such critics conveniently ignored the fact that billiards, "the gentlemen's game" was actually played by gentlemen, and that "throughout its history [it] has had precious little to do with public poolrooms but instead has been restricted to the billiard rooms of private men's clubs and private homes. And the upper class knows this even if the professionals don't... that To play a good game of billiards is a sign of a well-rounded education, but to play too good a game of billiards is the sign of a

¹ Polsky, Ned. *Hustlers, Beats and Others*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1985. p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

mis-spent youth."³ It is the upper class tradition that the Old Colony Club represents (although I can't speak for which side of the quote fits some of the members in the old days.)

BILLIARDS AND POOL IN THE CLUB

The official records of the Club note that the first billiard table was acquired in 1879, while the Club was still in rented rooms in the Davis Building (on the site of the recently defunct Woolworth's store). At that time, a group of members were allowed to have a table in an adjoining room "provided that none but such persons as are entitled to the privileges of the Club be allowed in the room." (12/1/1879) During the next year, the table was accepted into the Club: "Voted that if the subscribers to the Pool Table wish to give the table to the Club, they will accept it with thanks." (6/7/1880 - emphasis added), and that "... the subscribers of the Pool Table be allowed to move the table into the Club Rooms where they deem it best." (6/14/1880).

From that time on the Club supported a table (it needed repairs that first year) through charging a fee for its use, the proceeds of which went to its upkeep. A new combination pool and billiard table was bought in 1882, with the cost to be reimbursed through the fees collected by Mr. Leavitt Robbins, who was in charge of it. The hard use continued apparently, because a new table was needed in 1884, which was up for repair in 1886! The billiard table underwent similar vicissitudes over the next few decades, but it would be tedious to account for them all.

I found that billiards records themselves were for the most part rather uninteresting, consisting mainly of correspondence between the Club and various manufacturers of equipment. Most were querulous complaints by the Club on table repairs, ball replacement and so forth were met with various defensive responses by company representatives. What might be of interest, however, is the marked rise and decline of billiards as a Club activity over the half century or so between the mid-1890s and 1949, when the records cease.

In the first year for which financial record survive (1893), the table brought in \$61.60 and cost \$72.95 for upkeep. During the next few years, the table managed to cover expenses moderately:

1898	\$67.00	(\$59.85)
1899	\$38.65	(\$1.00)
1900	\$123.90	(\$80.07)

There is then a gap in the records (save an expense of \$121.75 in 1914, income of \$124.25 in 1916 and an expense of \$27.54 in 1917) until regular billiard accounts began to be kept in 1918.

From then on there was as well an interesting increase in the popularity of the game at the Club. The end of the First World War seems to have heralded a fashion in billiards at the Club, especially after a new table was acquired in 1922. In that year, the income rose dramatically:

1918	\$63.97	
1919	\$45.45	
1920	\$176.75	(\$58.74)
1921	\$168.55	(\$129.84)
1922	\$485.97	(\$534.49)

In February, 1922, it was decided that the Club should buy a new table (which was in place by May), and to remodel and enlarge the upstairs billiard room by removing a small bed room. A proposal was also put forward to install a bowling alley in the basement of the Club (!) but it was voted down as infeasible. Obviously the game had become far more popular, as the next decade of income/expense figures indicate:

1923	\$374.76	(\$112.62)
1924	\$547.80	(\$141.34)
1925	\$550.30	(\$65.50)
1926	\$405.25	(\$64.82)
1927	\$429.00	(\$157.78)
1928	\$402.55	(\$77.02)
1929	\$279.20	(\$78.15)
1930	\$323.25	(\$0)
1931	\$267.85	(\$430.65)
1932	\$201.08	(\$3.20)

In December, 1930, it was decided to acquire a new table, which was purchased the following year. However, the interest in the game was waning:

1933	\$138.75	(\$40.32)
1934	\$128.22	(\$41.45)
1935	\$131.10	(\$15.00)
1936	\$70.20	(\$2.50)
1937	\$40.00	(\$0)
1938	\$48.00	(\$2.00)
1939	\$40.75	(\$0)

³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

In 1940, a new rival to billiards was introduced - Ping Pong. From this time forward, the plebeian game of ping pong out drew billiards as a source of Club income, and apparently in interest as well. I will now omit any expenses for the table (they only are noted in the 1942 season) and oppose the income from billiards to that of the new upstart game:

	<u>Billiards</u>	<u>Ping Pong</u>
1940	\$—	\$116.00
1941	\$30.95	\$—
1942	\$26.11	\$62.48
1943	\$4.65	\$47.29
1944	\$3.25	\$46.72
1945	\$29.25	\$48.54
1946	\$27.04	\$46.20
1947	\$10.39	\$32.40
1948	\$2.70	\$25.46
1949	\$5.97	\$—

The golden age of billiards and pool at the Old Colony Club (despite a feeble increase after World War II) was over. Eventually golf, another game introduced by the upper classes from England, would in turn replace ping pong in the hearts of the members, but that is another story.

BILLIARDS AS A SOCIAL AGENT

I would now like to treat the subject of billiards not as a activity in itself, but as a indication of a far larger topic, the contest between traditional masculine culture and the moralistic attack on that culture by reformers. I should note that the following observations reflect my own inexpert opinions, but I trust they will not be uninteresting, at any rate.

In my various readings, I have been struck by the age-old struggle between segregated male behavior and the concomitant attempts to denigrate and control it by social reform. There have been repeated periods of general reform in American history since colonial times. In the earlier examples, the emphasis was primarily religious, with pious revivals and reform of manners based on traditional mores, but in the 19th century a new secular version developed which had physical health, abstinence, gender conflict and middle class propriety as foci. We seem to be going through one of these restrictive periods at the present time.

The first of these occurred in the period from about 1820 to 1850. It was then that the first health food enthusiasts appeared - vegetarians such as Sylvester Graham (who had begun as a temperance advocate) with his famous wholegrain meal, Joseph Smith of the Mormons, the great

revivalist Charles Grandison Finney, Thoreau and his friend Alcott who eschewed meat, cheese, butter, milk and tea (not to mention liquor and tobacco).

The big issues of the day were abolition, health, temperance and women's rights. They addressed and in some cases resolved some very real social problems, but their intense idealism also produced the notorious Victorian propriety and prudery and what has been called the "feminization of American culture." The ills of the nation, which were real, were largely blamed on overbearing masculine power, roughness and indelicacy (today reviled as "patriarchy"). Hard drinking, smoking, gambling, swearing, coarse eating and war were seen as men's faults that could be assuaged by women's influence and the reformers of the time were quite effective in taming the baser instincts of the cruder half of the race. The Rules (as Jake Brenner has shown us) were reasserted and soon the domesticity movement had tamed the home and driven the bad habits off into dark corners. There were a number of "dark corners" where men went to escape this regimen such as men's clubs, fraternal orders, barber shops and post offices, but the chief dens of iniquity were the saloons and billiard parlors.

The reform movement, as has usually been the case, peaked after about 30 years, although its effects were dominant in American society until after the turn of the century.⁴ By 1850, a reaction was beginning to set in, in part caused by the waves of Irish and German immigrants who lacked the Anglo-American's uneasy moral guilt. "The rapidity with which Billiard rooms have increased in this [New York] and other cities of the Union is extraordinary."⁵ As the Victorian home and public life hardened into feminized gentility, the siren call of freedom by "wine, women (not the correct ones) and song" caused a great increase in male-oriented retreats from the antimasscasared parlors.⁶

They fled to reservations of masculine society dominated to one extent or another by what was often called the "Sporting Life". Described as "the orientation of leisure around a set of hedonistic and deviant concerns... bookies and racetracks, orgies and stag shows, after-hours liquor-cum-gambling joints, cocaine, bars where prostitutes

⁴ Dr. David F. Musto, Yale Univ., as quoted in Kolata, Gina. "Cleaning Up Our Act: Temperance Movement Spreading." *Patriot Ledger*, 1/8/91, p. 10.

⁵ Michael Phelan (1850), quoted in Polsky, p. 24.

⁶ Antimasscasars, which became to symbolize the prissy gentility of middleclass Victorian homes, were created to protect furniture from men's hair oil. Nasty, dirty men!

are permitted or encouraged to operate, floating crap or card games)

...";⁷ this subculture revolved around and was symbolized by the poolhall.

Although few middle class men immersed themselves thoroughly in this bohemian milieu, the contrast with genteel propriety had an interesting demographic effect. During the period from the late 1880s to the early 1890s, men coming of age began to opt out of the respectability stakes by never marrying. These bachelors made up 42% of the male population 15 and over in 1890, as opposed to less than 25% in 1950.⁸ Today a similar movement, but instigated from the women's side, may be in effect.

Polsky notes that this bachelor subculture of the club and poolhall was not homosexual; indeed the "woman" element (such as actresses, loose women and so forth) of "wine, women and song" remained central to maintaining lifelong bachelorhood. It was largely a reaction of men born from the height of the reform era to just after the Civil War to the demands put on their fathers and themselves by polite society.

Of course this was not approved of by the monitors of that societies' morals. The free bachelors (and their high-living female "Mae West" confederates) were pilloried in the popular culture. The typical fashionable sporting clubman and debonair frequenter of poolhalls, saloons, racetracks, and stagedoors, sometimes referred to as "mashers", became the model of the melodramatic villain - natty frock coat, waxed moustache, silk hat, diamond stickpin and spats. It is this nefarious urban character who went about, in popular mythology, seducing innocent maidens and sporting with them by tying them to railway tracks or sawmill logs, or who left them "in a fate worse than death" to be sent bearing their illegitimate bundles out into the hard, snowy world. A typical male, he didn't even have the decency to display his animal colors as his poorer brethren did, but hid behind the illusion of fine clothes and suave manners to work his evil wiles.

On a lighter note, the bachelor sportsman was lampooned in the cartoons of the times - Barney Google, Little Jeff, Moon Mullins - who lived life at the edge of respectability, and who incidentally lured the harried married men such as Mutt, Major Hoople and Jiggs to sample the pleasures of the club, saloon and poolhall. Trying ineffectually to avoid social conflict and slink off

to their masculine haunts and habits, these comic figures reflected society's criticism of the poolhall lounge and clubman. As Polsky notes, "the ideology of this bachelor subculture spilled over to married life itself; that is, married men spent more nights 'out with the boys' than they do today, which of course further helped poolroom attendance."⁹

Male resistance to the feminine morality also manifested itself in a veritable "cult of the boy" that flowered at the end of the 19th century. Beginning with *Huckleberry Finn* (1875) and Charles Dudley Warner's *Being a Boy* (1877), this literary protest against the restrictions of respectability glorified the innocent carefree world of boyhood, its scrapes and pleasures, and its irrepressible mischievous, natural behavior (free of the grosser vices, of course, beyond cornsilk cigars and petty gambling). Tied to Mother but always in trouble, the Boy stood for the male unfettered. In such books as Thomas Bailey Aldrich's *The Story of a Bad Boy* (1895), Henry Shute's *Real Diary of a Real Boy* (1903), or Charles Clark Munn's *Boyhood Days on the Farm* (1907), the Boy made a romanticized statement about the pressures of Victorian adult life.

This was during this era that the restoration of the Old Colony Club (and its pool table) occurred in 1875. Just as the original Club was founded in 1769 as a retreat for upper class young Plymouth men from the sordid conditions of the taverns (in a period following, incidentally, the first "Great Revival" and its evangelical effect on manners), so the period of the 1870s saw the rapid increase even in Plymouth of clubs and fraternal orders; oases in the "puritan" desert of gentility where men could relax and let their guard down without the fear that Mrs. and the Misses Grundy might take offence. From this followed a golden age of clubs, which lasted until about 1920.

What happened? Well, by the early years of this century, the old Victorian strictures had worn pretty thin. Women as well as men began to feel restive, and things began to change. The "Teens and Twenties saw Victorianism denounced as "puritan" and unhealthily repressive, as Freud and the Debunkers took aim at the old moth-eaten ways. The next rush of reform, which began just before 1900 and lasted until the Depression (with lasting effect until the notorious '60s) didn't have the same broad effect that the earlier movement had. For one thing, the spectre of Victorian "puritanism" was still fresh.

For another, the movement was divided between a libertarian liberal side of feminism,

⁷ Polsky, p. 18

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 23-4.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 21

health (this time characterized by the new discoveries in hygiene in particular), dress reform, vegetarianism, birth control, and a conservative element of Fundamentalism, sabbatarianism, Comstockery (censorship) and, especially, temperance. If the 18th amendment got in from the conservative side, the liberalization of speech and fashion came into make the best of in the age of bathtub gin. The reform impulse was confused, much as it is today. Such uneasy bedfellows often tried to erect new restrictions with one hand and remove other restrictions with another.

The important result was, however, a new meeting between men and women, who could now both enjoy the license of the speakeasy and the newly-invented cocktail party, and to whom "free love" was a novel and daring discovery. Billiards, cardplaying (especially bridge) and bottled liquor moved the venue of entertainment in to the private home. Gentility reeled against the ropes during the Roaring Twenties, but unlike the "sporting life" which provided the largely masculine gaiety to the "Gay Nineties", the new revolt of the flaming youth encompassed both sexes. The old haunts lost some or much of their appeal as a less repressive society offered more release and co-ed pleasures to individuals. This left the male-only billiard-playing minority out of the picture, and the game lost its public popularity as it gained a place in private middle class homes.

Marriages began to increase in number, while masculine retreats declined, with a larger proportion of their members being either older survivors of a vanishing era, or married members with far less time to devote to "the fellows". The Depression apparently struck an economic blow as well to the old masculine culture that supported these institutions. Fraternal orders withered away as the older generation passed on. As Polsky said in closing his article, "The heyday of the poolroom is over."¹⁰

Yet one wonders, in a new age of feminine reform and increasing repression of traditional (nasty and unhealthy) masculine habits; of new prohibitory impulses towards tobacco, and as Dr. Musto, observes, liquor as well; and an increasingly anxious attitude towards sex, swearing, poking fun at people and boisterous behavior. Will this new reform - maybe not in time (probably after our times) - inspire a new masculine reaction which will once again promote an age of clubs and poolhalls, or whatever their equivalents will be in the new millennium?

OLD NEWS!!!

Looking for another feature for the Occasional Papers (and to fill the space fancy formatting has presented us), "Old News!!!" will reprint interesting odd bits of Plymouth or Pilgrim history that would otherwise go unnoticed.

LOCAL GUIDES WILL ADOPT PILGRIM GARB

Convinced It's "Good Business" When Rock
Photographer Triples Business With
Costume.

Plymouth's guides will no longer go about dressed in sweaters with caps tipped on the backs of their heads, like so many ticket-takers, but will be garbed in neat Pilgrim costumes, in a dapper green with black trimmings, and with the traditional white collar and cuffs.

The costume was made "regulation" by the guide committee at the opening of the summer. At first the boys were afraid of appearing in costume for fear of their friends would make fun of them. But the guides are now enthusiastic about the new costumes. They noted that Tracy Manjin, Plymouth Rock photographer, nearly tripled his business when he donned the Pilgrim uniform, and then slipped back when he had to remove the costume to send it to the laundry. The guides are hoping that their business will pick up as much as Tracy's when they change to the Pilgrim costume. At the present time Pilgrim costumes are required of the guides at the Rock but are optional at the monument. Next year the guide committee intends to make the Pilgrim costume compulsory for all guides unless some unforeseen impractical feature is disclosed.

[*Old Colony Memorial* August 3, 1939]

NEXT ISSUE:

The Dancing Girls of 1917; Belly-Culture: the Role of Food in Mens' Clubs; and Clambakes.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 30



A POST-PRANDIAL HAZARD.

Uncle (Gentleman of the Old School). "K HERE GEORGSH, THIS-'H WAY I SH' PLAY THIS-'H SHTROKE!!"

IS THIS WHY BILLIARDS WENT DOWNHILL
-- AFTER LIQUOR WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE CLUB IN 1925??



OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 4

June, 1991

NEWS AND NOTES

As the primary emphasis of this issue of the Occasional Papers will be on food, it is appropriate that we should begin with a request from Cindy:

URGENTLY WANTED: COOKS

- Anyone who is interested or has information of such, Please inquire at the O.C.C. Kitchen.

Thank you.

THE NEW ENGLAND CLAMBAKE

Few culinary events are more typically associated with New England than the clambake. Except for Thanksgiving (and, for the cognos-centi, Forefathers' Day) the clambake most perfectly embodies the local traditions of feasting pleasure. It is therefore peculiarly fitting the Old Colony Club to have an annual clambake.

As with anything beholding to tradition, there are strong opinions about the proper protocol for a true or authentic "bake". The orthodox usually stand out for an old fashioned pit-bake, with the heated rocks, rockweed and tarp, while other purists couldn't conceive of a proper 'bake which did not include baked fish in brown paper, or whatever. The second level in the hierarchy of 'bakes is the original "barrel bake", where the hot stones are put in the bottom of a wooden barrel sunk in the sand, the food added atop a layer of rockweed and cornhusks, and the whole covered with weed and sacking.

These older bakes truly steam the food, but today the more common method (especially for smaller 'bakes) is to combine a little boiling (of the lower layers) with steaming in the modern metal barrel bake. This innovation is often scorned by would-be purists, but is very effective when handled competently (as for example at the McKenna's last summer).

My first exposure to the clambake was a barrel bake (of the modern sort) my father and Reggie Marois put on at the Plymouth Rod and Gun Club in the early 1950s. This is certainly not as ancient a memory as other Club members might evince, but at that time I was informed of the fact that this was a true Plymouth tradition, which I should observe closely. Everything had to go into the barrels just so in separate cheesecloth bags (save the fish), and the barrels were heated over wood fires. The bill of fare, if I remember correctly, included sweet and white potatoes, peeled yellow onions, corn, hot dogs, breakfast sausages, bluefish, clams,

lobsters and brown bread (which were all steamed together) and watermelon, rolls, butter (melted and otherwise), beer, tonic and coffee (which were not). Years later, I put on bakes of this sort for the guides on Mayflower II with the same menu (minus the fish). In 1965, this cost each diner \$2.75 - with lobster!

As one of my areas of expertise at the Plantation is culinary history, I have been asked from time to time about the history and origins of the clambake. Like most people, I and Nanepashemet, the Wampanoag scholar at the Plantation, always assumed that the clambake was something the colonists learned from the Indians. Certainly the method seems suitably "primitive", the supplies locally available and the massive prehistoric shellheaps found up and down the coast mute testimony to the importance of summer shellfish collection (for eating and drying for preservation) to the indigenous inhabitants.

However, when we began to try to seriously document the link, or to discover references to the Indians practice of steaming clams, we came up blank. There is, to date, no available evidence that the Indians ever conducted clambakes or imparted this skill to the white settlers! Possibly the most intensive investigation of the clambake phenomena has been undertaken by Dr. Katherine Neustadt (U. Penn), who was also unable to find any description of the clambake before the early 19th century, when the traditional bake appeared in the Narraganset Bay area. She notes that the local Indians, as well as the whites, assume that it has always been part of their tradition but that in all of the colonial references to Indian cooking (and they are fairly thorough), nothing can be definitely pointed to as a precedent of the modern 'bake. This is not to say that the 'bake technique was not in fact Indian and somehow escaped documentation. That is quite possible. Still, the fact that the Indians had been quietly harvesting shellfish in full view of the immigrants for over two centuries, it is unlikely that such a lack of references can be attributed entirely to an oversight.

What does appear is that the clambake (first referred to in the 1830s) seems to burst full-blown in the early 19th century in places such as Newport where large crowds of people enjoyed "traditional" bakes. For example, the Fourth of July clambake held in honor of William Henry Harrison in 1840 in Rhode Island was attended by 10,000 people. By the end of the century, the clambake (and its lesser relation, the "shore dinner") was fully established as a New England institution.

What may be even more interesting is Dr. Neustadt's speculations on the rise of the popular event. "Although greatly oversimplified, the argument can be made that it was the founding of the Old Colony Club in Plymouth in 1769 by a group of civic-minded, largely Harvard-educated gentlemen, with the aim of commemorating 'the first landing

of our worthy ancestors at this place,' that the Yankee clambake had its genesis."¹

This rather surprising attribution deserves some clarification. Dr. Neustadt noticed that in that first dinner of 1769, the ideal of simplicity was given a big role (see below, in the article about the place of food in clubs), and that clams were fairly high on the menu. In later Forefathers' Day dinners, clams were given a place not second to succotash in importance. It is the *symbolic* place of clams in New England tradition that provides the key to Dr. Neustadt's claim.

Clams were originally considered a poor sort of food, unsuitable for a feast where the symbolic thrust is luxury and expansiveness. Any sensible person in the 17th or 18th century would stoop to having clams at a public banquet. What occurred with the introduction of clams (as an inverted symbol of virtue through simplicity) was that the clams were not only admitted to the feast, but actually be the most important feature. It was this new legitimacy of feasting on clams which Dr. Neustadt attributes to the Old Colony Club, that led to the popularity of clams feasts, such as clambakes.

When Forefathers' Day was adopted by the Boston "Sons of the Pilgrims" in 1798 and celebrated on Dec. 22nd at the Boston Concert Hall, two innovations were introduced: the dinner was referred to as the "Feast of Shells" and the Plymouth Forefathers were called the "Pilgrims" for the first time. The initiation of the term "Pilgrims" (first used in a Ode by Thomas Paine - not the essayist, but son of Robert Treat Paine who signed the Declaration of Independence) is of course highly interesting but it is the connotation of the "Feast of Shells" that concerns us here.²

As at the 1769 dinner, there was an emphasis on simple (wild) foods indigenous to New England, of which the clam was typical. Ever since the period of King Philip's War, clams, like the pumpkin, had been cited as a peculiarly American food, simple and unpretentious, and quite independent of European luxury, thus symbolic of native virtue and autonomy. For example, the poet Benjamin Thompson, in "New England's Crisis" (1676) offers the use of clamshells as spoons in

ironically comparing the rugged fare of the first settlers to the delicacies of later times:

The times wherein old
Pompion [pumpkin] was
a saint,
When men fared hardly yet
without complaint
On vilest cates [foods];

1 Neustadt, Kathy. "For Want of a Nail" (or how a study of the Allen's Neck Clambake leads to the demise of Western epistemological imperialism)", final draft, 4/27/89, chapter 2, p. 13.

2 Matthews, Albert. "The Term Pilgrim Fathers and Early Celebrations of Forefathers' Day", *The Colonial Society of Massachusetts Publications*, Dec. 1914, p. 324-5.

the dainty Indian
maize

Was eat with clamshells
out of wooden trays."

Clams and pumpkins are similarly associated with simple fare in the 17th century "Forefathers' Song":

"If fresh meat be wanting
to fill up our dish,
We have carrots and
turnips whenever we
wish,
And if we've a mind for
a delicate dish,
We go to the clam bank,
and there we catch
fish.
For pottage, and puddings,
and custards, and
pies,
Our pumpkins and parsnips
are common supplies;
We have pumpkin at morning
and pumpkin at noon,
If it was not for pumpkin
we should be undone."

It was the unheard-of inclusion of the lowly clam at a formal dinner by the Old Colony Club in 1769 that brought the symbol into actual practice. The Boston group, perhaps familiar with the clamshell analogy, carried it a step further by calling the dinner a "Feast of Shells", and by probably including clams as well (although we do not know the actual menu). Matthews notes that this term directly derived from the immensely popular (although apocryphal) "Poems of Ossian" which purported to be ancient Scots sagas celebrating the natural life of the past.³

The shell-image soon became a central component of the event. At the 1799 Boston Forefathers' Day dinner, the Sons of the Pilgrims brought an immense (200 pound) oyster shell from the Natural History Museum to serve succotash from! They also may have tried to use shell spoons like those cited by Thompson, as such were noticed as being rather ineffective at the feast in 1804, when the politically conservative Boston group were lampooned by their opponents as the "clam-eaters" and denounced for the number of toasts proposed, as encouraging quite un-Puritan drunkenness.

Clams as a symbolic item for feasting thus became familiar in New England. On the fourth Thursday in August, 1812, a shellfish feast was held at "the old celebrated spot" on the rocky shore of Squantum in Quincy (using shell spoons) which was presided over by "an Indian woman dressed in

3 *Ibid.*, p. 327.

blanket and moccasins."⁴ Dr. Neustadt observes that this was not a real Indian-derived event, but rather a white political gathering in the mold cast by the "Sons of the Pilgrims", and probably the direct ancestor of the later clambake or shore dinner. Thus wherever the clambake may have emerged from in the mists of time, its importance as a group ritual for coastal New Englanders might be attributed to the Old Colony Club. Maybe not Thanksgiving, but Clambakes and Forefathers' Day - not a bad effort for New England foodways by our old Club!

THE OLD COLONY CLUB & THE CABARET GIRLS - 1917

America's involvement in World War I did not come without advance notice. After two years of continental war, despite anguished declarations of American neutrality and isolationism, it was evident that trouble was ahead. The Border War with Mexico was a preparatory diversion; Congress had federalized the old state militias on June 3, 1916, and then called out the new National Guard on June 18 to chase Pancho Villa & Co. The Club has a photo of the Plymouth Guard departing on the train to this engagement.

The German government declared on February 1, 1917 that it would sink all ships in the western North Atlantic, neutral or belligerent. Despite the fact that Wilson had been elected in November 1916 on the slogan "He kept us out of war", the United States was thus drawn into the conflict. Even before war was declared on April 5, Massachusetts had appropriated a million dollars to equip the State's new National Guard of 9,171 men. Guard recruitment began in earnest (following the recruitment needs of the Regular Army) for another 6,000 troops, and when it became evident that the National Guard would be taken into Federal service, a second "State Guard" of 9,000 men was formed to take care of safety at home.

On July 25th, the Massachusetts Guard got the call. Tents for the troops were erected on the playing field behind Nathaniel Morton School for Plymouth's Company D (the old Standish Guards) of the 5th Massachusetts, who elected officers under the direction of (OCC member) Major Charles H. Robbins. As news of the impending departure of Company D (as part of the 101st Infantry) became known, the Old Colony Club decided to organize a farewell banquet for the troops (and other local enlisted men). A special meeting was held on July 30, 1917, at which a motion by William P. Libby was passed to create a committee of five members (William Douglas, George L. Gooding, H.E. Mabbett, Major Robbins and President Robert Harlow) to organize "entertainment in the honor of the departure of the Standish Guards and other enlisted men of the Town on war service".

It was decided to assess each member \$5.00 towards the costs, and although a number of dunning letters had to be sent (some never paid), \$465 was raised. The remainder after expenses was to be contributed to the Standish Guards fund -

this being the munificent sum of one dollar and thirty-six cents!

The banquet was held at the Hotel Pilgrim on August 3, 1917. Special cars were hired on the street car line (Brocton and Plymouth Street Railway) to transport people to the hotel. The large dining room was decorated with fresh flowers and American flags. 160 guest attended (including 92 Old Colony Club members) at a cost of \$240. George Gooding provided 150 souvenirs (@ \$8 each, described in the bill as "French Mirrors"?), \$20.20 was paid for 600 packages of cigarettes (10/pkg) and 200 after-dinner "Overland Puritanos" cigars.

The most intriguing bill, however, was for the entertainment. The White Entertainment Bureau of Boston supplied (for \$75) a Mr. Phillips, a Miss Hill and "four cabaret girls". They were later put up at the Samoset House for the night, along with several guests. Also two of the hotel guests, Mrs. Richard Percy and Mrs. Caroline Mihr-Hardy, assisted in the entertainment. Unfortunately, there survives no description of what occurred.

The returning troops were accorded an entertainment on their return as well, on May 6, 1919.

The interesting parts of the first event was the leading patriotic role the Club played in the local event, and the intriguing precedent set by hiring the cabaret girls. Who knows when we might want to invoke this to liven up the Club once more?



⁴ Neustadt, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18ff.

BELLY-CULTURE: THE SOVEREIGN ROLE OF FOOD IN MEN'S CLUBS

In previous issues of the Papers, we have considered the place of various stalwarts of Men's Club culture, such as cigars and billiards, which have largely "gone by" as far as the Old Colony Club is concerned, but this month we will be considering a central feature of the Club as it is today - food! Next to liquor (which we will cover in another issue), food is for us each Friday the foundation for the convivial pleasure so vital to a successful club. Such an important subject cannot be covered in a single issue, and there will be one or more additional articles on "Belly-Culture" in future issues as well.

The Old Colony Club was founded on a feast - Forefathers' Day 1769 being marked by that first of many December dinners by which we Plymouthers have celebrated the Pilgrims long before Thanksgiving took them to be its national symbol. On that first Forefathers' Day, the menu was selected as much for its symbolic as its gustatory value; the effect striven for was the virtuous simplicity of the hearty fare of the Pilgrims. "These articles were dressed in the plainest manner (all appearance of luxury and extravagance being avoided, in imitation of our ancestors, whose memory we shall ever respect)."

The first bill of fare (to use the old English term rather than the French "menu") included:

A large baked Indian
whortleberry pudding,
A dish of succotash
A dish of clams
A dish of oysters and a
dish of codfish,
A haunch of venison
roasted on the first
jack brought to the
colony,
A dish of sea fowl,
A dish of frost fish and
eels,
An apple pie,
A course of cranberry
tarts, and
Cheese made in the Old
Colony.

Perhaps this list needs a gloss for modern readers. Whortleberries are our blueberries and huckleberries (which could be preserved for winter use); the jack mentioned is a mechanical device to automatically turn a spit; sea fowl are, of course, ducks and a frost fish is a tomcod (it appears around here about the same time as the first frost).

Historically the fond image of colonial culinary simplicity was as much myth as reality - the Pilgrims' cuisine (when they could indulge, that is) was not the plain bland food their descendants imagined, nor would they employ clams at feasts.

As inspiration, however, the image works well, and continues in the modern Thanksgiving dinner which while extensive, is traditionally unsophisticated.

While a conscious attempt to emulate the plainness of the Pilgrims didn't figure in the first Forefathers' day bill of fare enjoyed by the Club following its reconstitution in 1875, the meal was still quite simple. "The dinner was served in Landlord Chandler's best style, and comprised all the delicacies of the season, accompanied with the five grains of corn that always figure at 'Forefathers' dinners."⁵

Bill of Fare
SOUP.
Succotash.

FISH.
Blue Fish.

ROAST.
Beef,
Turkey,
Green Goose,
Prairie Chicken.

ENTREES
Chicken Salad,
Macaroni with Cheese.

VEGETABLES
Boiled Potatoes,
Sweet Potatoes,
Cauliflower,
Squash,
Turnips,
Celery.

.....
RELISHES
Cranberry Sauce,
Worcestershire Sauce,
Halford Sauce,
Apple Sauce,
Mixed Pickles,
Tomato Ketchup.

PASTRY
Plain, Frosted and Fruit Cake,
English Plum Pudding,
Washington Pie,
Apple Pie,

⁵ *Old Colony Memorial*, Dec. 30, 1875. The five kernels of corn, an ahistorical but traditional symbol of Pilgrim hardship is a very early introduction to Forefathers' dinners, and was found in Boston before 1800.

Mince Pie
Squash Pie.

DESSERT
Apples,
Oranges,
Grapes,
Nut and Raisins,
Ice Cream.

TEA.
COFFEE.

Here the Club reflects a masculine preference for homey, ordinary foods that is also characteristic of the London clubs which are the epitome of the institution of the Men's Club. The typical English menu, while different from our own in detail, parallels the cuisine we enjoy as club food here in America. Robin McDouall notes in his Clubland Cooking that "From the earliest days of clubs, food seems to have developed on two lines: first there is the very simple food of the chop-house: the chop, the steak, the sandwich, the savoury. Then, for private parties, there have always been the sumptuous meals, cooked by a French chef in the French style. The resulting evolution is that today club members like home cooking - call it, perhaps country house cooking, with a strong emphasis on what I can best describe as nursery food. When occasion demands, however, the chef must abandon the curried chicken, the apple tart and the ground rice pudding and produce lobster Thermidor, *tournedos Rossini* and Nesselrode pudding - not all, I hope, at the same meal."⁶

While we (and many other American clubs) do not have access to the fancy French cooking McDouall mentions, the other sort, which he characterizes as "chophouse" ("steakhouse" to us) or "nursery food" is just what not only the Old Colony Club but also the Club of Odd Volumes, the Union Club and other clubs enjoy. The English club fare cited is more characteristic of luncheon than dinner, but the essential point, the preference for plain cooking, is relevant.

I should explain that "nursery food" in this case is not baby food but rather the homey food English middle and upper classes were served in their formative years (when a separation from the grown-ups table was kept) and thus is the exact equivalent to "Mom's home cooking" here in the U.S. It is in each case a basic and satisfying, carefully prepared, meat and potatoes, cookery which is unlike either the institutional food of colleges and the Armed Services or the fancy or exotic restaurant fare found away from home.

The fact is that club members, while they might luxuriate in all sorts of exotic food in other contexts, possess a core of conservative taste formed in their youth which finds great comfort and pleasure in a predictable good, home-cooked meal in the convivial and informal surroundings of the club.

Dishes tried and familiar, freshly prepared, and made without the foreign or technological aids common to prepared foods elsewhere establishes the club meal as a oasis of comfort and relaxation in a world of alien demands. This preference sets Clubland apart from the world of Fashion and Society.

This realm of plain hearty food is alien to the tastes of the socially progressive and of women in general. The great shibboleths of "Nouvelle Cuisine" and other food fads, from contemporary dietary Inquisitions to our various nutritional paranoias such as vegetarianism, cholesterol panics and so forth are barred from admittance. There is a strong fear of food in America today, as Julia Child notes, and it has had a depressing effect on the quality of life if not its quantity or length. The club is one place where this fear is muted.

The key to Clubland cookery is enjoyment. Food here is not simple fodder nor is it a modern form of penance for fleshy lusts - it is something to unaffectedly consume free from the pressures of the work-a-day world. The progressive and the fashionable eater is beset by the over-intellectualization of his or her diet. Is it up-to-date, is it ecologically justifiable, does it sin in the area of meat, fat, salt, sugar, nutritional balance, quantity or, worst of all, rank conventionality? Then it must be eschewed (however good it smelt or tasted) and what ever is commanded by the culinary pundits of the moment substituted. It is this sort of culinary terrorism that the club avoids.

But even men's tastes change over time, and we are no longer the trenchermen our ancestors were. Some of this is due to the imposition of doctor's rules in individual lives, but there is a long trend from the gourmandizing of the last century to the lighter, and in the face of increased costs, less complex meals of today. Talking with Joe Dixon, I discovered that the old standards of Club dinners have like so many things fallen away. Where once it was accepted custom to begin each Friday meal with a course of fish, salad and baked beans, now we follow the more general practice of soup and salad. Despite this modification, the Old Colony Club dinners are peculiarly satisfying in both consumption and companionship.

There is a simple truth here. The human animal has both needs and desires. One is necessary for its survival, the other for the enjoyment of this brief earthly existence. The satisfaction of hunger is one of our most basic utilitarian concerns, but we need not be limited to that. Eating can also be one of our most enduring pleasures. The great error of the nutritionally obsessed or any other species of food moralist is that they have gone overboard to satisfy what they perceive as the only justifiable reasons for consumption; the continuation of life and the maintenance of some abstract ideal standard of health; entirely ignoring the capacity for pleasure that a consciously imaginative cuisine can provide.

At one time, mankind ate simply to survive, and much of their industry was devoted to this basic need. In time, some men, the tyrants of the polis and leaders of tribal society, contrived to move beyond the insecurity of where their next sustenance might be coming from, and went from simply satisfying their appetites to the search for pleasure from the

⁶ McDouall, Robin. Clubland Cooking. London: Phaidon, 1974, p. 18.

consumption of food. This search for gustatory pleasure led to a conscious search for culinary delights that pleased the Inner Man as well as his mortal frame. In modern times, Western Civilization has made the simple search for one's daily bread a foregone conclusion (except in extraordinary circumstances), and we have the same ability the tyrant did to go beyond mere satisfaction of appetite to eat what pleases us. For some this means the excesses of the gourmand or the preciousness of the gourmet, but for most people, it is simply the choice to eat what we want without the moralists' concern over each jot and tittle on the menu.

With every freedom comes responsibility. We learn that the proverbial "cast-iron stomach", if too heavily depended on during the incumbency of its natural existence (from, say, ages 7 to 27), will quite quickly wear out its warranty and become one of those rebellious bellies we inherit upon middle age. Indulgence or prodigious consumption

will similarly have an adverse affect on our comfort, our worldly appearance, and, as the medical fraternity never fail to tell us, our fractious internal plumbing. All this is very true, but the temptation to hie away to a gustatory monastery and a diet of weeds and bird seed is not the only answer. We have a choice: exist as if we were saving up our days for some sort of retirement after death, or use the days given to us to enjoy life in simple and pleasurable ways. So a few nights are spent blessing St. Pepto Bismol so that one's older age is spent, not repenting the chances not taken, but in culinary retirement dreaming of the pleasures of past consumption.

Let us honor our culinary heritage and fail not to appreciate the joys of food both varied and plentiful. In the end it is a benign indulgence, for each his own, and let the food teetotalers, like their abstemious cohorts in the question of

alcohol find grim satisfaction in denial and concern for a marginally longer life of voluntary deprivation. As Mark Twain observed, "Part of the secret of success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside." Eat, drink and you will be merry, and as for the other thing, have you ever met a 217-year old abstainer?

OLD NEWS!!!

The Club was quite up-to-date in 1918!

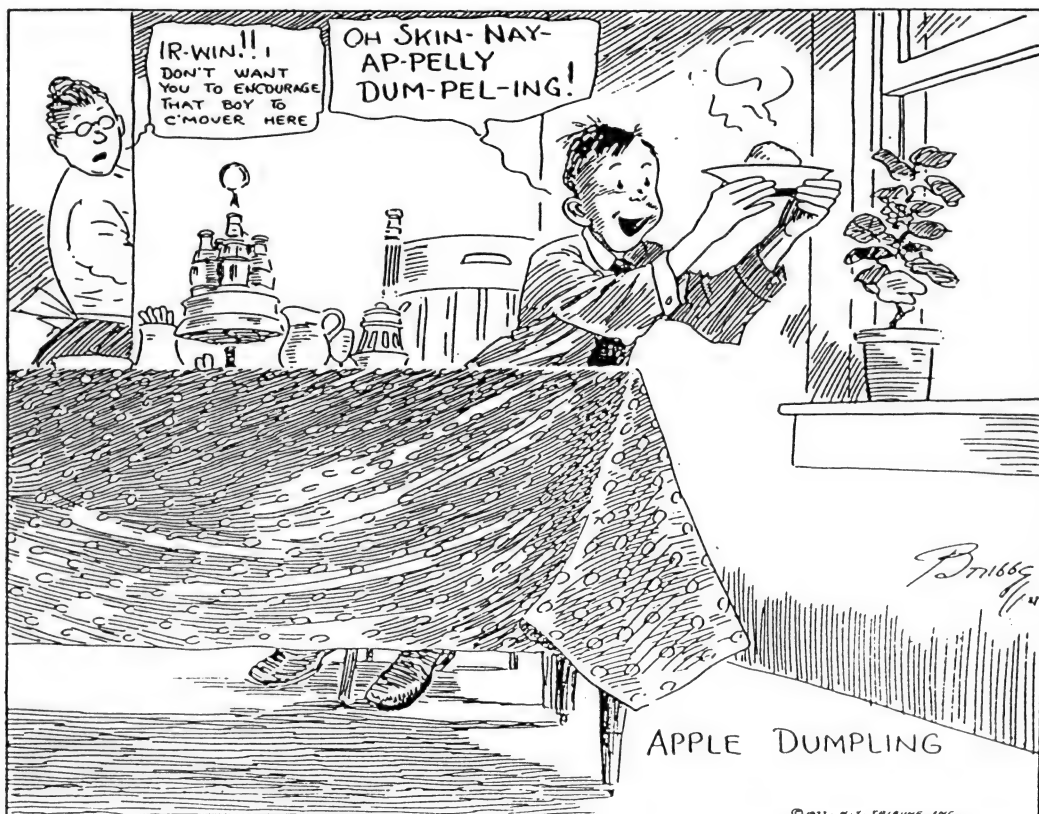
FOREFATHERS' DAY

Forefathers' Day will be properly observed this year on Monday, December 23rd by the Old Colony Club, who will hold its annual meeting and election of officers. The old time succotash dinner will be served as usual, Congressman Joseph Walsh has accepted an invitation to be present and will possibly bring with him one or two of his colleagues. A colored jazz band will furnish the entertainment both vocal and musical.

[*Old Colony Memorial*, Friday Dec. 20, 1918, p. 4]

NEXT ISSUE:

A Further Look at Belly-Culture in the History of Clubs; A Visit to Antebellum Plymouth, Pageants in Plymouth Past, and... Any suggestions gladly accommodated! What would you like to see?





OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 5

September, 1991

NEWS AND NOTES

It has been a very warm summer since our last number, with crops and gardens (and even hurricanes) springing far ahead of their wonted schedules, while residents as well as tourists flee to the ponds and beaches. Warm Friday evenings also afforded pleasant gatherings on the porch (or our "summer smoking lounge"), especially since the old air conditioner played more a symbolic than active role this season.

Chief among the accomplishments of the season was the re-painting of the Social Room.¹ This pleasant improvement was crowned by the mounting of a new bulletin board, an exercise which at the time afforded certain critical members much scope for comment and encouragement. A start has also been made in the installation of some Club memorabilia and related Plymouth artifacts in the display case, including a bronze (plated) model of Forefathers' Monument, a bottle from the Plymouth Bottling works and some tobacco items such as a box of pre-WWII classy La Corona Corona cigars and a ca. 1900 La Caporal cigarette package.

Besides the regular meetings, there were several additional gustatory sessions at the Club; two Wednesday night Chowder & Salad Suppers on July 17 & 31, and the annual Clambake on August 4, moved from the McKenna's under threat of rain. The Chowder Suppers resurrect in a tentative way the traditions of the Jabez Corner Chowder Club of the last century, to which several Old Colony Club members also belonged (see the picture in the Reading Room). The suppers were attended by about 18 or 20 people each time, and we hope to repeat their success next July.

The Clambake was a particular success this year, with clams, lobsters and the rest presented at the peak of culinary perfection. The McKennas deserve the Club's heartiest encomiums. And on this note of dining pleasure, we can turn once again to the culinary history of Men's Clubs Past.

1 On consideration, the term "bar" or "bar room" (which is commonly used in reference to the room where we gather to pay for suppers and get drinks) seemed a bit dclass. Upon asking the Elders (Giffy and Kendall) what the room should be called, it came out that, since the room was for years the dining room, its transition to its current usage left it without a respectable title. The suggestion of "Social Room" was offered which seemed eminently reasonable, and I have adopted it here.

THE EVOLUTION OF CLUBLAND COOKERY

Until 1697, when White's was founded, gentlemen's clubs were simply groups of individuals who met on a regular basis. This usually occurred at different taverns and coffeehouses or, alternately, settled at a particular establishment which they shared with regular patrons and perhaps other clubs. An example of the former was the Civil Club, founded by businessmen in the City of London in 1669 (and lasting until 1877), which met at different places for dinner four times a year, while the 18th century Kit-Cat Club of artists and writers shared with political (Tory) Fountain Club, Christopher Cat's tavern in Shire Lane, which was famous for his mutton pies. Dr. Samuel Johnson's various literary clubs continued a tavern tradition extending back to the time of Shakespeare and Jonson. It was White's evolution from a public to a private institution that began the tradition of independent clubs housed in their own buildings with self-contained resources of food and drink.

Coffeehouses usually charged a penny for entrance, and regular patrons met there daily to pursue mutual interests and enjoy the collections of newspapers and less formal gossip. Some became the resort of such specialized groups that they discouraged ordinary customers, and became so dedicated to their exclusive clientele's interests that they evolved into places of business, such as Lloyd's of London.

White's, London's oldest existing club, grew out of such a coffeehouse. It was begun by an Italian immigrant named Francisco Bianco (cook, musician and amateur magician) as a regular coffee (and chocolate) house in St. James Street. Bianco decided to encourage a select clientele, first by raising his entrance fee to six pence, and then by reserving some rooms especially for his favored patrons. By 1736 it had been reorganized by Bianco's successors as a proprietary club, leading the way to the established clubs of later times. Although activities such as gambling and elite socializing umight have been the most visible attractions at such establishments, high quality food and drink remained an inevitable requirements of any successful club.

Gambling was a leading activity in the best clubs during the 18th century, and vast fortunes were won and lost

over cards or wagers. Thousands of pounds sterling might be bet on the most insignificant whims of fate: in the 18th century Lord Alington once wagered three thousand pounds on which of two raindrops would run down the window first. Such bets were entered into a special book at White's (which still exists), and the outcomes recorded. Others bet who of their acquaintance might marry whom, and which couple would have the first "issue". Death was a popular subject for wagers. "On November 4, 1754, 'Lord Mountford wagers Sir Jno Bland one hundred guineas that Mr Nash outlives Mr Cibber.'... Underneath the entry is the tragic note ('Both L^d M, and Sir J.B put an end to their lives before the bet was decided')."¹ Nash was the celebrated 'Beau' Nash, master of ceremonies at the fashionable resort of Bath, while Cibber was the poet and playwright Colley Cibber. The unfortunate bettors both committed suicide under pressure of gambling debts. Bland died on the run in France in 1755. Mountford, after a New Year's Eve of whist at the club, made a will, went into an adjoining room and shot himself. Ironically, he would have won the bet -- Cibber died in 1757 and Nash in 1761. But we are getting away from the subject of food.

The high fliers of White's, Boodle's, Crockford's and the other gambling clubs or "hells" were indulgent of their other appetites as well. The legendary origin of the "sandwich" relates that the hard-playing Earl of Sandwich asked a waiter named Montagu to make him something to eat by putting a slice of meat between two pieces of bread so he would not have to interrupt his gambling to dine. The clubs always had dinners ready, especially while Parliament was sitting, and included snacks as well: "In 1797, [dinner] at 10s. 6d. per head, malt liquors, biscuits, oranges, apples and olives included..."²

There were also clubs that were founded only for the purpose of meeting to eat. An early example was the Beef-steak Society in Queen Anne's day (ca. 1709). A famous member was the actor Dick Estcourt, who wore their badge, a small gold gridiron, on a green ribbon. After this first "society" (they disliked being called a club) faded away, a second Beefsteak club, the "Sublime Society of the Steaks", was founded in 1735 by another actor Henry Rich. They met every Saturday in a room over Covent Garden theatre (or nearby), and only ate steaks (cooked on a special gridiron later retired to a place of honor) -- no other food -- but swilled down plenty of punch and port wine. The membership was limited to 24 (later 25), which included not only writers, artists and actors such as Wilkes, Hogarth, Garrick and Sheridan's brother-in-law Linley, but also members of the nobility such as the Earl of Sandwich, the Duke of Norfolk and

the Prince of Wales (later George IV). They wore special blue coats with red capes and cuffs, and buttons with the initials "B.S.". The Beefsteaks also had another custom which was widely imitated -- as we can attest. The members traditionally and mercilessly hurled witticisms, jests and rude remarks at the President throughout the dinner.

The old Beefsteak Club survived until 1867 (and there were other "beef-steak" clubs as well), but like our own Club, the idea was too good to lapse for long, and a resurrected Beefsteak Club opened in 1876 with a very select membership. "At one time it was said that, to become a member of the Beefsteak you had to be 'a relation of God -- and a damned close relation at that'."³

Dining clubs such as the Beefsteak were not limited to England. Besides our own venerable Club, there were several such early gatherings in America. One should note here that the South River Club of Annapolis, Maryland, which had its own building since 1740 and has met as a club since about 1700, predates the Old Colony Club, as does Philadelphia's State in Schuylkill (otherwise known as "the Fishhouse") which has a continuous history since 1732.

The earliest Boston social and dining club was apparently the Wednesday Evening Club (1777), which also still exists. Boston also has a Thursday Evening Club (1846) with a scientific membership, and a Saturday Club, with a distinguished roster of Boston authors (it was founded in 1855 in connection with the founding of the Atlantic Monthly), the Club of Odd Volumes and numerous others.

The 19th century saw a great flowering of clubs in England and America, as the custom of residential clubhouses with all the comforts of home developed apace. The ideal was to reproduce the gratifications and services of a well-run gentleman's home, including of course his dining room and wine cellar. The club was to be a safe retreat from the cares of the world, and a place where congenial individuals could mingle together free from interference. "Refined if somewhat solemn comfort" became the order of the day, which led to the humorous analogy of dining at Brook's Club in St. James Street as being "like dining in a Duke's house with the Duke lying dead upstairs."

The more wealthy clubs even outdid many of the nobility in their capacity to sustain an impressive cuisine. The French Revolution, in disrupting the establishments of the aristocracy, sent a number of their erstwhile chefs into unemployment. These men, in attempting to earn a

1 Colson, Percy. *White's 1693 - 1950*. London: Heinemann, 1951, p. 98.

2 Timbs, John. *Clubs and Club Life in London*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1908, p. 96.

3 Lejeune, Anthony. *The Gentlemen's Clubs of London*. London: Bracken Books, 1984, p. 55.

living by preparing the rich cuisine of which they were masters, created the modern institution of the French restaurant (an idea which would take generations to flower in England). Before this time, public food consumption was supplied from peddlers, cookshops (sort of primitive fast food places), coffeehouses or taverns; none of which were known for their haute cuisine. Good cooking, once the prerogative of the noble rich, came into the reach of the middle classes, with the result of a veritable fad for gastronomy.

One famous chef who fled the Revolution by crossing the channel was Louis Eustache Ude, formerly cook to Louis XVI. He was employed by the Earl of Sefton, and then at clubs such as Watier's and Crockford's, the elite (and notorious) gambling club. In the 1820s, while White's and Brook's were still serving their long-suffering members the standard roasts, steaks and boiled fowl, Crockford's had moved into the delicacies of French cuisine, and benefited greatly thereby, even with the uncertain temper of M. Ude.

The most celebrated of the club cooks in this era was the flamboyant Alexis Soyer, a student of Ude, who came to England following another French revolution in 1830. Soyer, well-known for his work in food reform (not, as his biographer quickly notes, the sort of food reform characterized by nut cutlets and calorie counting!) and the Crimean campaign, is of interest here for his work at the Reform Club. When the liberals deserted Brook's en masse in 1838 to found the Reform, the architect Barry worked with Soyer to create the best kitchen in London. "During the 1840s the kitchens of the Reform Club became celebrated as the epitome of gastronomic perfection."⁴

The result of such cookery was to add a very high style of cuisine to the clubland experience -- not that simple English fare was forgotten (as we noted in the last issue). The final outcome was that, as in so many things in which men find solace, the clubs have thoroughly mastered the care and feeding of the inner man, and have contributed in no little measure to the greater welfare of the race.

PLYMOUTH ANECDOTES OF 1889

We often hear today about the influence of tourism in Plymouth, but this is scarcely a new topic. Tourists have been coming here since the seventeenth century to gaze at the venue of Pilgrim progress, as witch trial judge Samuel Sewall did in the 1690s. In 1698, Sewall mentions that the major inn, Cole's Ordinary, had been

Edward Winslow's house and was apparently the oldest house in Plymouth. On one occasion, he walked out in the morning and visited the grist mill, turned up the lane to Burial Hill and came down by the Meetinghouse, tracing footsteps in which millions of tourists have followed.⁵ In April, 1700, he noted that "I have now kept one Sabbath with those who first kept sabbaths in New England, viz. March 31, 1700."⁶ In 1702, he was gratified to meet Isaac Robinson, son of the Pilgrims' pastor, "But to my disappointment he came not to New England till the year [1631]..."⁷

Visitors such as Sewall had to make the journey by packet boat or stage, for the first great boost to tourism, the completion of the Old Colony Railroad, only occurred in 1844, with the opening of the railway hotel, the Samoset House, in 1845. Several of the early visitors have left interesting accounts of their impressions about the town of Plymouth which, being little known today, might be of interest of Club members as they cast a revealing light on the history of our community often overlooked in more general histories. Therefore we will be taking extracts from these accounts from time to time, with some modest commentaries. In this issue, we have taken a segment of an article which directly comments on the effect of tourism a century ago.

In 1889, the *New England Magazine* began a new series of issues, the first (September) of which was largely devoted to Plymouth where New England itself began. In this premier selection, there was an article, "A Plymouth Pilgrimage", describing the town as it was then by Plymouth author (as well as abolitionist, temperance worker and early feminist) Abby Morton Diaz (1821 - 1908).

Abby was the daughter of educational pioneer Ichabod Morton, who lived in the recently condominized Hobs Hole House near Jabez Corner, and who brought his family to the transcendentalist commune of Brook Farm. It was there that Abby taught school and met her future husband, Manuel Diaz of Cuba. Once back in Plymouth, she became well known as author of children's books (the *William Henry Letters*, the "JimmyJohn" series &c.) as well as collections of essays on various topics including one on the tyranny of Yankee men who demanded their wives cook innumerable pies for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

While the article is far too long to reprint here in its entirety, we think some of the ephemeral impressions Mrs. Diaz rescued from oblivion are worthy of reproduction.

5 Sewall, Samuel. *The Diary of Samuel Sewall*. M. Halsey Thomas, ed. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973. vol. I, p. 388.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 428.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 463.

4 Morris, Helen. *Portrait of Chef*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938, p. 32.

After a brief introduction to the experience of historic impressions by the visitor to Plymouth, she discusses the growth of the tourist industry in the town, and its effects:

"From the table-talk of my boarding-house I learn that up to a period within the memory of by no means the oldest inhabitant, Plymouth 'had itself to itself,' and that a quite primitive simplicity obtained among the then sole possessors of the land -- the aboriginals, so to speak, of the modern Pilgrims who have since landed. The earliest of these adventurers, so far as history has recorded, were certain wandering tribes [the earliest tourists] of 'the better sort' -- clergymen and others, -- who discovered afar, on the high shores of Manomet Bluff, the dwelling-house and farm of one Nathan Holmes and Mis' Ruth, his wife. The spot promising all that could be desired, an alliance was formed whereby they entered at once upon the delights of the place, one of these being what proved a lasting acquaintance with the family. The Holmes house, amplified, still receives wanderers down at the 'Pint' -- in modern parlance, Point -- the home of the Holmeses.⁸

Other early adventurers, exploring in a different direction, discovered Clark's Island, the property of the Watsons and long since known to me by report as hallowed by Pilgrim associations, also an ideal summering place, the resort of a class of boarders, representatives of the learning of the learning of Harvard and the culture of Boston city, -- and the humbler culture of other cities. It still offers unique attractions; but for many its glory departed with the genius of the place, uncle Edward Watson, familiarly and loving called 'Uncle Ed,' endeared to the hearts of numbers privileged to know him as a genial host, poet, philosopher, boatman, farmer, and courteous old-time gentleman.⁹

8 We see here that the summer traffic began with informal hospitality in private homes (such as the Holmes house) in addition to the old taverns such as the Central House or Plymouth Rock House in the town center. Nathan and Ruth (Cobb) Holmes apparently began a guesthouse trade in the early years of the 19th century, and Manomet House (as the "amplified" Holmes house was known) was later run by their cousin (twice removed? - it's hard to sort out the Holmeses) Henry B. Holmes in 1860, and by Clark W. Holmes at the time Mrs. Diaz was writing. It later became known as the Ardmore Inn and then (?) the Mayflower Inn.

9 Mrs. Diaz's memories of Clark's Island had a personal link - she had taken care of Uncle Ed Watson's house there one summer when it was a famous resort for the Transcendentalists such as Dr. Goodwin and David Wasson. "Mrs. Diaz received the guests, presided at the table, made all the bread, and huge quantities of particularly choice sponge cake; superintended everything, and in addition composed the rhymes to accompany the tableaux and entertainments that George Bartlett of Concord was continually getting up." Offprint from the Woman's Journal, c. 1900, "The Life Work of Mrs. Abby Morton Diaz", verso.

Later summer discoverers settled in divers places, and as it was in time of the forefathers, so at this period more settlers came over, and continued to come; more and more, more and more, always more to follow, until now the host no man can number. Their name is legion. Those of them known as permanents plant their summer abodes on high places commanding the best views, or in low places along the shore, to 'White Horse,' beach, or penetrating miles and miles into the woods, by unfrequented roads, settle on distant pond shores once sacred to the pensive fisherman or the lover of Nature in her seclusion, while the transients crowd private dwellings and swarm in hotels they alone have made necessary. Even Plymouth Beach, that slender strip which pushes its very peculiar self three miles into the sea, like a long, protecting arm, -- as if to guard the town from knowing too well what the wild waves are saying, -- Plymouth Beach, seemingly secure in its isolation and its lack of vegetation, long time visited only by wild fowl and the domestic clam-digger, or an occasional sportsman taking advantage of an easterly storm, or a quiet pleasure party seeking seclusion and the charms of solitude by the open sea; even that unsheltered strip has been bereft of its loneliness, and now has its Pavilion to interrupt the view, its made landing-place, and its Shore Dinners, and lately an impertinent and out-of-its-place mite of a steamer puffed across at intervals through the long summer day.¹⁰

No more aggressive, but more imposing and vociferous, is the mighty Boston leviathan which makes its daily way up the harbor, startling the ear with its piercing shriek, and sends forth its multitudes to 'do' the town. These swiftly swarm the streets. Making up in activity what is lacking in time, they are everywhere at once, -- at the Hall among the relics; in the Court House pouring over ancient deeds and records; away at the National Pilgrim Monument, criticizing, perhaps even maligning it; on Burial Hill, vainly assaying a hasty making out of its timeworn epitaphs; purchasing momentos at Burbank's. Marching in force down Leyden Street, pausing at the sites of the 'first dwellings,' they pass along Waterside to the Rock, or, diverging, spread out on the plateau of Cole's Hill at the foot of Middle Street, thence down by long flights of steps, -- and high flights of imagination, -- to the same Rock, very likely partaking of an irreverent meal of fish and clams under the very shadow of -- not the Rock itself -- that cannot cast a shadow, being incapacitated thereof by situation and the size of what has been left above the ground; but its canopy can, for this

10 It was at this time that the "cottage culture" that has so marked Plymouth in this century really took off, so that not only summer visitors but many Plymouth families sought the pleasures of Nature from their own summer cottages either at the various beaches or on the ponds. One thing every one wanted was a clambake or alternatively the "shore dinner", a sort of clambake minus the pit-and-seaweed method.

possesses in an eminent degree all the requisite qualifications. A pleasant story is told of an enthusiastic couple who, inspired either by sentiment or a desire to found their wedded life on a solid basis, journeyed hither from afar, and planting their feet upon 'Forefathers' Rock,' were there united in the bonds of matrimony.¹¹

This much, and more, from certain sprightly and jocose aboriginals, who enliven the dinner table, and from whom I gather that, although the new settlers have not exterminated the natives, they have civilized them to the extent of causing some departure from the sensible ways and characteristic simplicity of the olden time, and have effectively introduced the art and science of turning everything into money, so that the various little services and neighborly kindnesses, once prompted on by a spirit of friendliness, are now charged for, or made the basis of expectations.¹² Sundry minor customs, once religiously observed, have now fallen into disuse. Nine o'clock, saith my informant, was once the recognized bedtime. 'Why, sir! when we girls used to go to visit our grandmother, she used to chalk out our 'merrills' and our 'fox and geese' for us on the 'bellusses,' but at the first stroke of the bell we had to pick up our coffee-corns and our speckled beans, and hang up the 'bellusses,' no matter if we were on the very point of hop-skip-and-jumping.¹³ The elders had to lay aside their work, or if drowsy, to bestir themselves; the chairs were set back against the wall, the fire raked over, and the fire shovel laid on top, candles were taken and the 'keeping-room' deserted. Meetings closed seasonably, and on the street people caught out of doors would be seen skurrying home. A light seen burning as late as ten implied sickness or severe affliction.' She denies, however, the assertion that a Plymouth audience 'is tied to the nine o'clock bell-rope.' and says that although the recognized summons may startle a scattering few to the point of leaving, feeling

themselves in the wrong place, it is by no means an *ex-unt omnes*; for its effect in the main is only to excite a general uneasiness and cause the speaker to feel that his remarks are no longer receiving the attention their importance demands. The after nine, and after ten, disquiet on the streets she thinks would quite bewilder a returned worthy of the immediate bygone generation; and that he would be perplexed as to the day of the week by the modern latitude regarding salt fish dinners. Formerly, the whole town, rich and poor, ate salt fish with pork scraps [Bud - take note!] and potatoes for their Saturday dinner, and people always knew when it was Friday night by seeing the salt fish put in soak. She tells of a certain Captain Carver who always had three salt fish boiled, bound together; the middle one for his own eating, the outside ones to dispense in charity. But all is changed, and my vivacious informant is herself 'a little mixed' since the disappearance of the old brick oven with its Saturday certainties; for now, 'though beans keep their place fairly well, you cannot tell when you have a right to expect your baked Indian pudding! Its dark red and suety richness and all the sweet, hard, dark brown bread crusts are a thing of the past; and worse than all the rest, very few now feel bound to have succotash on Forefathers' Day; and the benighted rising generation even confound this historical dish, peculiar to the Old Colony, confound it with the very ordinary and disgustingly modern mixture made of green corn and beans! as if the rich flavor of the genuine and only real article were not imparted by the lye used in hulling the dry corn, and as if succotash proper were not a winter dish, prominent at every Forefathers' Day dinner since Forefathers' day dinners began!"

PLYMOUTH'S FIRST PAGEANT - 1895

While many people are aware of the Plymouth Tercentenary pageant of 1921, the town's first pageant occurred in 1896. The gothic wooden First Parish Church in Town Square burned down in 1892. The Church asked the Town to pay part of the cost of the new stone tower as it included a bell owned by the Town of Plymouth rung three times daily; morning, noon and the curfew noted by Mrs. Diaz. The bell, originally cast by Paul Revere and Son in 1801, had broken in the fire and had to be recast.

In 1896 some Plymoutheans engaged Margaret M. Eager, a writer of children's plays and pioneer pageant director, to manage a historic festival to raise the money. She created "Old Plymouth Days and Ways", a pageant¹⁴ which was first performed in July, 1896, and which raised half of

11 The importance of "Burbank's" might be lost on some younger readers. From the 1870s until the 1940s, Alfred S. Burbank was the leading purveyor of Pilgrim books, Plymouth photographs and post cards, and tourist trifles in Plymouth and our next door neighbor in the Russell Building.

12 We often hear about the danger of commercialization, which Plymouth has tried to avoid on the waterfront for years despite the fact that shopping, even for dreadful souvenirs, is often just what the tourist trade demands. Mrs. Diaz notes how it had a bad name even a century ago, and how the influx of visitors caused Plymoutheans to abandon their old hospitality and charge for everything - something we are doing even yet!

13 I am not really sure what "bellusses" are, but they are very likely "bellows" ("bellowses" being an old dialect form of the word), whose flat sides were marked with chalk to act as playing boards for "Merels" (also known as "Nine Men's Morris") and "Fox-and-Geese", which were board games usually played with pegs but here played with coffee beans and speckled beans used as markers.

14 Although some authorities insist that the first true American historical "pageants" occurred only after L.N. Parker's English examples (ca.1905), the 1896/7 Plymouth festival has enough of the standard features of the later pageants to be accurately classified as one.

the desired sum. It was re-staged the following year to complete the fund-raising.

"Old Plymouth Days and Ways" was held each day on July 28-31, and August 2-3 in 1897, and included 14 "Scenes" of tableaux, songs and dances, as well as a children's interlude (in which over 100 Plymouth youngsters were costumed as Pilgrims, Indians, wild flowers and bees). The Scenes were: "Boston, England", "Holland", "The Voyage of the Pilgrims", "Southampton, England", "The Signing of the Compact", "Indian Home Life (a war dance!)", "The Treaty with Massasoit", "A Service in the Old Fort", "The Courtship of Myles Standish", "Wedding of Francis LeBaron", "Wedding of Gen. James Warren and Mercy Otis", "A Tea Party of 1760", "A Scene from the Revolution" (by Duxbury citizens) and a "Flag Dance". There was also an extensive exhibit of Plymouth antiques and artifacts loaned by residents in the Winslow House on North St. (now owned by the General Society

of Mayflower Descendants).

This pageant was the forerunner of not only the 1921 celebration but of numerous other community pageants, as a veritable fad for such events flowered in the first decades of the Twentieth Century. It brought together hundreds of Plymouth citizens to celebrate not only the Pilgrims but the rest of Plymouth history as well.

Many members of the Old Colony Club were engaged in the festivities, including Presidents Arthur Lord, James D. Thurber, George Mabbett, Jason W. Mixter, H. Earl Mabbett and George L. Gooding.

NEXT ISSUE (DECEMBER, 1991):

The Origins of Plymouth Succotash, Music and the OCC, and more from Mrs. Diaz.



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OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 6

December, 1991

NEWS AND NOTES

Since the last number, we have very sadly lost a number of our older members, including George C.P. Olsson (a member since 1929), Bob Pierce and Bob Curtis, but possibly the most disturbing death was that of Giffy (Alfred N. Gifford) in a tragic traffic accident. The shock of losing a friend to the violence of an automotive calamity rather than to a peaceful passing in bed is distressing enough. That it should be Giffy's fate, after such a long and courageous life during which he **cheerfully overcame** so many obstacles to happiness to achieve a serene enjoyment of life at an age few of us can hope to emulate, to depart in such a manner is doubly troubling.

More than any other member, Giffy had become a tutelary spirit of the Club, whose unflinching humor and enthusiasm for good fellowship acted as an inspiration to one and all. In his role as Club Institution and keeper of Plymouth memories, he cannot be replaced. Even we younger members, who only knew him a short while, found his presence a comfort and a hope in the face of life's adversities and the threats of age. We will all miss him.

There is one particular lesson which Giffy could teach us all, and that is loyal attendance at the Club. As Cliff Sampson so mordantly reminds us, the very economic survival of this organization relies on regular attendance at the Friday meetings. Paying the dues is good, but that is only the first step. We created this paper in the hope of providing members who might not be able to attend a particular speech or presentation something of the historical experience that the Old Colony Club stands for. But more importantly the Club stands for camaraderie and fellowship, which can only be had in person. Let's take Giffy's example and show up regularly!

The "Trophy Case" or display cabinet in the Library has acquired a number of interesting artifacts, which we hope everyone will take time to look at. Many, which have only an indirect association with the Club (such as the tobacco items) should be alternated with fresh objects from time to time. We would like to solicit suggestions, loans and donations to the case to achieve an interesting diverse and changing exhibit.

I had planned to have some more of Mrs. Diaz's article on Plymouth a century ago, but find that there is no room. We will try again in the Spring number.

THE ORIGIN OF PLYMOUTH SUCCOTASH

Each ethnic region has its own characteristic cuisine, but there are often certain transcendent dishes that hold such a crucial symbolic position in the culture of a people that any attempt to slight or, worse, bastardize their preparation is taken as a serious insult to that heritage. Typically as well, there are age-old differences of opinion about the correct preparation of such dishes which have been enthusiastically debated for generations. In the United States for example, Texas chili versus other sorts, North Carolina (pulled pork) Barbecue as opposed to the tomato-sauced varieties and of course the New Englanders' view of New York Clam Chowder as a perfidious heresy have excited ferved and even violent altercations by their partisans.

Plymouth may be unusual in that the town has its own unique dish (one which much of the rest of the country seems unaccountably uninterested in) which it defends against pallid pretenders to the name elsewhere. I am of course speaking of Succotash! - that sacrament of the true Plymouthean and triumph of the traditional Forefathers' Day table. While there is general agreement about the ingredients of the dish¹, there are at least two schools of thought about the preparation or service of True Plymouth Succotash (which I might characterize as the Orthodox and the Reform). The first, indubitably the older method and which is still adhered to by the Old Colony Club, features the separate service of the boiled meats and the vegetables, while the latter cuts the meats up and serves them together with the vegetables as a thick soup. Having been brought up in the Reformed tradition, I prefer the soup, but I can appreciate the historical legitimacy of the Orthodox method.

Having made the Succotash for the Pilgrim Society Forefathers' Day dinner for several years, I am quite

¹ There is one school of thought which rejects potatoes from the dish, apparently on the basis that white potatoes were unknown in Pilgrim times (which they were). However, this sort of *ex post facto* authenticity ignores the fact that beef and pork, if perhaps not barnyard fowl and turnips, would be equally wrong for the real 1620 dish (if the Pilgrims had it then). Potatoes were added at an early enough date, certainly before 1769, that the quibble I feel cuts too fine a point to be warranted.

cognizant of the emotions aroused by even these variations. The Pilgrim Society meetings each year are abuzz with judgements on "THE SUCCOTASH", and eagerly await Rev. Gomes' traditional poll of opinion. This is always good fun. Unfortunately, I missed what has become the most infamous hour in the history of **Plymouth Succotash**. On December 21, 1985, the Society was rocked to its very foundations when it was served - not Plymouth Succotash - not even Succotash with yellow turnip (!) - but **SWEET CORN AND LIMA BEANS!!!** I must leave to your imagination the tragic scene. What made it worse was that the perpetrator was a Plymouth concern, run by a Plymouth, nay, Pilgrim family. The mind boggles.

Despite setbacks of this sort, the faith has been kept by the Old Colony Club, the Pilgrim Society and a declining number of old Plymouth families who serve true Plymouth Succotash each Forefathers Day. A few years ago it fell to the Sheraton Hotel to provide the sacred dish for the Pilgrim Society, and they asked my advice. Some of our members might find the synopsis on the subject of Succotash interesting, so I will provide an expanded version here, which includes some speculations on the origins of the dish.

PLYMOUTH SUCCOTASH

I wrote to the Sheraton as follows: "Larry Pizer has asked me to provide some background information (and the recipe) for the preparation of a true Plymouth succotash. As I suppose you have heard by now, the question of proper Plymouth succotash is as contentious as any Southwestern discussion of what real chili consists of. The annual Forefathers' Day dinner is marked by a grim determination to judge and judge harshly whatever attempt has been made to recreate this sacred dish. Already the ignominious effort to foister a "summer succotash" of sweet corn and lima beans on the Forefathers' diners a few years ago has entered Plymouth mythology as a debacle of Olympian proportions. It is therefore a matter of some importance to understand what is expected, and recognize the fact that pleasing everyone is beyond the realm of human capability.

THE INDIAN ORIGINS OF SUCCOTASH

Plymouth Succotash appears to have been directly derived from the Wampanoag Indian's primary winter dish, a corn-and-bean-based stew to which fish and/or meat were added. The beans were the native kidney beans and the corn a flint variety which could be stored dry and then restored to make a palatable dish we now call "whole hominy." These corn soups, while not always acceptable to European tastes, were quite nutritious and could contain anything available at the time. "Msickquatash" (boiled corn soup or succotash)

therefore was a standard staple dish, like a stew with many variations. In its simplest form, it is just corn and beans, either boiled green corn, boiled cornmeal or boiled "hulled" corn (hulled corn - dried and removed from the cobs, then boiled in lye to puff up and burst the hulls off) with other things: beans (fresh or soaked), some sort of fat, cracked bones of venison, fish, rabbit, roots, wild onions.

As Daniel Gookin observed of the local Wampanoags during the period of King Philip's War in the late 17th century, "Their food is generally boiled maize, or Indian corn, mixed with kidney-beans, or sometimes without. Also they frequently boil in this pottage fish or flesh of all sorts, either new taken or dried, as shads, eels, alewives or a sort of herring, or any other sort of fish. But they dry mostly those sorts before mentioned. These they cut in pieces, bones and all, and boil them in the aforesaid pottage. I have wondered many times that they were not in danger of being choked with fish bones; but they are so dexterous to separate the bones from the fish in their eating thereof, that they are in no hazard. Also they boil in this furmety¹ all sorts of flesh they take in hunting; as venison, beaver, bear's flesh, moose, otters, rackoons, or any kind they take in hunting; cutting this flesh into small pieces, and boiling it as aforesaid. Also they mix with the said pottage several sorts of roots, and pompions, and squashes and also several sorts of nuts or masts, as oak-acorns, chestnuts, walnuts; these husked and dried, and powdered, they thicken their pottage therewith."²

The corn soup was apparently eaten through out the New England area. In 1634 William Wood recorded his impressions of the cuisine of the local Native Americans in the Massachusetts Bay region: "They seldom or never make bread of their Indian corn, but seethe it whole like beans, eating three or four corns with a mouthful of fish or flesh, sometimes eating meat first and corns after, filling up the chinks with their broth....they are free as emperours, both to their countrymen and English ...counting it a great discourtesy not to eat of their high-conceited delicates and sup of their un oatmealed broth, made thick with fishes fowls, and beasts boiled all together, some remaining raw, the rest converted by over-much seething to a loathed mash, not half so good as Irish Boniclapper {coagulated sour milk}."³

Writing about the Indians of Maine at the turn of our own century, Frank Speck observed that their standard food was traditionally boiled hulled corn. "As soon as the boiled corn left from the first meal gets cold and

1 "Furmety" is a traditional English whole wheat porridge, usually sweetened and rather like modern rice pudding.

2 Gookin, Daniel Historical Collections, p. 10.

3 Wood, William. New-Englands Prospect, p. 86, 87.

grows stale & ferments, but it is liked as well sour. Other things are often put into the corn soup to add a flavor: an eel's backbone, moose leg, deer or moose backbone, and cracked joints for this purpose. One of these may last quite a season, being boiled over and over again in soup. Neighbors will even send around to borrow one to boil in their soup. With the plain corn, beans are often combined, making corn-and-bean soup."4

The modern "succotash" of fresh corn and beans was originally a summer variety where fresh kidney beans were cooked with "green" (unripe) flint corn (sometimes on the cob, sometimes scraped off), which was substituted for the dried whole corn which was all that was available in the winter. It is this summer style, now usually made with sweet corn and lima rather than the native kidney beans, which has become the recognized meaning of the term "succotash". Before the modern sweet corn was introduced into this region from the Iroquois in the 18th century, only the green corn could be so used, and its season was of necessity far shorter than the easily preserved hominy. Only Plymouthans among the non-Indians appear to have retained a memory (Europeanized as it has become with beef, fowl, pork, white potatoes and turnip) of the traditional hulled corn, bean and meat soup served by our Indian predecessors in this area.

THE FOREFATHERS' DAY TRADITION

Ever since the first Forefathers' Day dinner in 1769, this Anglicised version of the traditional winter succotash has been prepared in Plymouth, often in a special bowl and with much fanfare. Over time it has evolved a little, from a boiled dinner consisting of corned beef, fowl and salt pork with white Clark's Island (or Cape Cod) turnip, potato, hulled corn (whole hominy) and boiled beans (with some salt pork - not fatback) to a thick soup containing these foods. Earlier, the meats were served separately, with pieces cut for each guest, and the remainder was made into a soup with some of the fowl. All of the leftovers were put in the soup the following day. Some mossbacks still insist this is the only true succotash but it is both bland and expensive for today's tastes (I can hear their anguished howls even now at such blasphemy).

However, for the last generation or two, it has become acceptable to prepare it all as a soup which can accompany a meal, and that is what I would think is what you should do. 20 years ago, it was generally available from the traditional restaurants in the area such as Currier's, but no longer. The finished product should be a pale thick soup, in which 1/2" pieces of gray corned beef (not red if possible), and boiled fowl, with cubed potatoes and white turnips (the proper kind is a large green-topped

turnip found very occasionally in stores in the fall, but purple tops are o.k. - not yellow rutabaga!) and hulled corn (the only way to get this commercially is to use the white and yellow whole hominy from I.G.A., or Goya as at Purity Supreme) thickened with a pureed bean paste. There is no seasoning beyond a little extra salt.

Plymouth Succotash for 100 people

(or 150 as 1st course):

25 lb. gray corned beef
5 - 5lb. fowl
5 lb. lean salt pork
6 lb. dry white navy beans
20 lb. boiling potatoes
10 lb. white green-top turnip
20 - 15 oz. cans whole hominy (5 cans yellow)

Put all the meats in cold water and boil until tender, then drain, reserving the skimmed broth as stock to cook the vegetables. Bone and dice the meats, and reserve. The beans take a long, slow cooking in some of the fat broth until they can be pureed in a food processor. The puree is then reserved, and care must be taken to cool both beans and broth lest they sour, which is a frequent disaster with this dish. The potatoes, white turnip and hulled corn should be cooked in the broth. Before serving, mix meat and veg. together and add the bean puree as it is heated. Be careful it neither burns on nor sours - small batches help. If it comes out well, the diners will usually ask to buy the remainder by the quart. It reheats particularly well, and can be successfully frozen.

Here are some traditional Plymouth recipes (modern comments in brackets; about 3 -4 of these batches for 100 people):

Mrs. Barnabas Churchill's Succotash

(early 19th cent.)

1 quart large white beans [dry]
6 quarts hulled corn (smutty white Southern best)
6 to 8 lb. corned beef (second cut rattle rand)
1 lb. salt pork (fat & lean)
4 to 6 lb chicken [fowl best]
1 large French white turnip
8 to 10 medium sized potatoes.

Soak beans overnight. In the morning simmer in soft water until beans are soft enough to mash and water is nearly absorbed. About eight o'clock, put salt pork and corned beef into very large kettle of cold water. Skim as they begin to boil. Clean and truss chicken and add to meat about 1 1/4 hours before dinner time. Allow longer if fowl is used. Be sure to have plenty of water in kettle. Two hours before dinner time put mashed beans and hulled corn into kettle with some of the fat from the meat to keep them from sticking. Add enough liquor

4 Speck, Frank. Penobscot Man, p. 93.

[stock] from the meat so that the mixture will absorb it all but not be too dry. Cut turnip into inch slices, add to meat about eleven o'clock. Add potatoes, one half hour later. Remove chicken when tender and serve whole. Serve beef and pork together, the chicken, turnip, and potatoes in separate dishes, - the beans and corn in the Succotash Bowl. The meat generally salts the mixture enough [but it may not today]. Save the liquor from the meat to warm the corn and beans the next day, serving the meat cold. Like many other dishes, this is better warmed over."

Mrs. Catherine E. Russell's Succotash (1914)

Boil two fowls in a large kettle of water. At the same time, boil in another kettle 1/2 pound of lean [salt] pork and two quarts of common white beans, until like soup. When the fowls are boiled, skim off the fat and add a small piece of corned beef, 1/2 of a turnip sliced and cut small, and 5 or 6 potatoes sliced thin. When cooked tender, take out the fowls and keep them in the oven with the pork. The soup of beans and pork should be added to the water the fowls and beef were boiled in. Add salt and pepper. Four quarts of hulled corn, having been boiled soft, are added to the soup. Before serving, add the meat of one fowl. The second fowl should be served separately, as also the corned beef and pork."

Haire's Restaurant Succotash (1930)

5 to 6 lb. Fowl
5 lb. Corned Beef
2 quarts Hulled Corn
1 quart Beans (2 lb.)
2 lb. Turnip
4 lb. potatoes.

Boil fowl and corned beef, separately or together for 3 hours. Stew beans and mash, [takes] about one day. Boil potatoes and turnip together in [combined meat broth] liquor - diced about 1/ inch. Add beans and hulled corn. Set aside to freeze. Shred meat when reheating."

MUSIC AND THE OLD COLONY CLUB

There is a curious custom that occasionally surfaces in the Old Colony Club, whereby the entire company prevents the President from speaking by launching into song, to wit: "Down by the Old Mill Stream." In this they carry on the traditional hazing of the President that has been characteristic of many social clubs (as, we noted in the last number, at the Sublime Society of Beef-steaks in London), but it is also an attenuated survival of the older custom of social singing once so much the part of any festive gathering.

In the days before recorded and broadcast music, people were always ready to engage in amateur music-making for their own entertainment. Group singing was particularly popular among men's associations, from the practiced Barber Shop quartets to the energetic but bibulous attempts of fellows on a spree. We are all familiar with the belief that the particular song favored by inebriates was "Sweet Adeline", and the image of sodden men in undone evening dress yodeling their favorite song with the support of a lamp-post remains a common stereotype. Why "Sweet Adeline" called forth this response I can not say - "How Dry I Am" makes better ironic sense, but as Dickens said in a similar case, "The wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for." Suffice it to say that group singing was found in all areas of life, and clubs were well served by the custom.

Maurice Disher describes the old practice well: "Bring your music'... perhaps those words are still used, but if so they are spoken to a musician. Not many years ago they were regularly addressed to everybody by everybody else. There was a widespread belief that all, capable or incapable of singing, must sing. Goodfellowship upheld it. To rebel was to hurt the feelings of kind friends willing to suffer horrible noises in a good cause. The similarity of what millions experienced as the result of the custom now astonishes us... We seem to recollect the same people: the sentimental tenor, the stern baritone, the formidable bass, the hero worshiper who copied his idol, the man with one song and one song only, the lady who went for top notes with no means of reaching them, the parents who believed in their child, and the hog who stuck to the piano stool. Whole populations with a vast repertoire to choose from kept to a small pattern which was the same wherever you went."⁵ But they have all been swallowed by time.

The broadside ballad was one of the earliest publications aimed at the general public, and was well known (if not respected) by our Pilgrim forebears. In fact the songs spread through broadsides were so thoroughly adopted by the populace that they made up the greatest part of what we know as "folk music." During the last century, eager folklorists such as Cecil Sharp set out to record and preserve the ancient traditional music of the common people, which they believed was in danger of being forgotten in the face of uncouth music hall or Tin Pan Alley songs. The idea was that the older songs were the honest and unaffected creations of the "Folk", and far more worthy than some recent commercial ditty. It was only later that the ironic truth was discovered that 90% of these "folk" compositions had actually began life as an equally commercial broadside ballad.

⁵ Disher, Maurice. Victorian Song. London, 1955. p.13.

All sorts of songs were thus made available, from pious hymns and sentimental ditties to ribald comic and tavern songs. The latter were very popular, and their tunes were often quite challenging in order to allow accomplished singers to show what they could do. One of these drinking songs, "To Anacreon in Heaven", provided the tune to "The Star Spangled Banner" which remains a unwanted challenge to singers in this unpracticed age. The use of existing tunes for new librettos was a standard approach, and even in Pilgrim times, ballads were published with the instruction that the words were to be sung to the tune of some earlier song.

The earliest Forefathers' Day celebrations of the Old Colony Club in the 18th century were characterized by appropriate songs, many especially composed for the occasion. At the first meeting in 1769, the leading song was, according to member Benjamin Watson, John Dickinson's "Liberty Song" (written the previous year) which was set to the very British tune "Hearts of Oak." The first two verses and chorus are as follows:

"Come, join hand and hand brave Americans All,
And rouse your bold hearts at fair *Liberty's* call;
No *tyrannous acts* shall suppress your *just claim*,
Or stain with *dishonor* AMERICA'S name.

Our worthy *Forefathers* - let's give 'em a cheer -
To *climates unknown* did courageously steer:
Through *oceans* to *deserts* for *freedom* they came,
And dying, bequeathed us their *freedom* and *fame*.

CHORUS

In FREEDOM we're born, and in Freedom we'll live;
Our purses are ready
Steady, friends, steady,
Not as SLAVES, but as FREEMEN, our money we'll give.

In 1770, a poem by member Alexander Scammel was sung, set to the tune of the "British Hero." On the 1771 celebration (which took place like the 1991 celebration, on Monday, the 23rd) the "Old Colony Song" was sung. No one is sure what this was, but the best guess is that it is a very curious poem allegedly written in the early days of the Colony, which begins: "The place that we live in is a wilderness wood..." (This song deserves a treatment of its own, which I will get to in a later issue).

The first publication of songs about the Pilgrims was a broadside containing four Forefathers' Day songs published by the Boston "Sons of the Pilgrims" society in 1801.

NOTE: AN ORIGINAL COPY OF THIS RARE PIECE OF PILGRIM MEMORABILIA WILL BE ON EXHIBIT IN THE OLD COLONY CLUB TROPHY CASE THIS FOREFATHERS' DAY.

By the time that the first guide book to Plymouth was published by William S. Russell in 1846, a number of appropriate Forefathers' Day songs and hymns had accumulated, and were collected in an appendix to Russell's book. They included songs by Plymouthans and members of the New England Society of New York, as well as William Cullen Bryant, Oliver Wendell Holmes and of course, Mrs. Felicia Hemans, whose "The Landing of the Pilgrim Sires" (better known by its initial line "The breaking waves dashed high") remains the Forefathers' Day anthem of the Pilgrim Society.

However, such pious songs are not the only ones enjoyed at the Club in days gone by. The meetings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were often graced by favorite popular songs. Several especially printed song sheets were published, giving the words to songs that were sung by the gathered members. For Forefathers' Day 1910, the Club combined traditional songs for the occasion such as "Two Hundred Years Ago" (written by Rev. James Flint of Salem for the Centennial Celebration at Plymouth in 1820, with music by B. Brown), "Rock of Liberty" and Mrs. Heman's famous song with a variety of tunes including "Maryland, My Maryland" (!), "The Soldier's Farewell", "A Stein Song", "Old Black Joe", "My old Kentucky Home", Yale's "Boola Song", "Bring the Wagon Home, John", "What's the Matter with Father?", "Sweet Adeline" (and before liquor was allowed at the Club - they held Forefathers' dinners at hotels and drank there), "Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly!", "America" and "Auld Lang Syne".

Andrew Kerr presented a program of songs to the Club on April 12, 1913, for which there was a sing-along sheet including "I Want to be in Dixie" (they always did, melodically at least, in those days), "Ev'rybody Loves a Chicken" (girls were chicks then, too), "Silver Threads Among the Gold", "My Old Kentucky Home", "The Red Light on the Track", "Sweet Adeline", the "Stein Song", "Old Black Joe", "Old Folks At Home", "Alexander's Ragtime Band", "I've Got Rings on My Fingers", "Moonlight Bay" and "America", and choruses to "My Beautiful Lady", "Every Little Moment", "My Hero" and "Put on Your Old Grey Bonnet".

In 1915, the Forefathers' Day celebration included a number of entertainers such as James R. Chandler, Geo. Bartlett Cutter and A. Fred Phillips at the piano, magic by Prof. H.V. Baril, and the "Old Colony Club Chorus" under the direction of E. H. Dorr. The songs chosen that night included again "Rock of Liberty", Maryland, My Maryland, "My Old Kentucky Home", the "Stein Song" and "America", as well as "There's a Girl in the Heart of Maryland" (that state seems popular...), "He's a Devil in His Old Home Town", "On the 5:15", "General Grant", and the choruses to "Moonlight Bay", the chorus to "I'm

on My Way to Dublin Bay", "Good-Bye Girls, I'm Through" and "It's a Long Way to Tipperary".

There seems to have been a regular practice to hire singers as well as enjoy the Club amateurs (no further mention of a "Chorus", though) in the following years. On an advertising card preserved from 1921, a Fred W. Hathaway offers "the best Quartets, Soloists, Instrumentalists, also high-class Vaudeville and Cabaret" acts, "for your Club, Lodge, Ladies' Night, Smoker, Reunion and other events." One agency the Club did employ was the "Billy Timmins Entertainment Bureau" of Boston. It was apparently successful for the 1925 Forefathers' Day dinner, but on Dec. 24, 1930, Mr. Timmins was a bit defensive: "Your letter received and contents noted. Replying to same, will say that I am certainly surprised at the attitude shown in your letter. The money you mention is out of reason, as that would not pay the two comedians I had on the show. The talent were all recognized performers and I can not agree with you when you say the show was poor. The talent in my estimation was in keeping and suitable for an occasion of that kind. I shall expect to receive check not later than Saturday, as the performers have got to be paid." Singing remained a custom at least in to the 1950s, if the later song sheets are indicative. There are three sheets that apparently post-date the Second World War, one a published pamphlet (Everybody's Favorite Community

Song Sheet) with 77 selections, mostly choruses to well-known tunes, and two mimeographed collections of 19 and 28 songs apiece. There are no traditional Forefathers' Day songs on these, and their selections are largely the common songs from the pre-Rock and Roll era. The last sheet, for example, has mostly sentimental songs, from Edwardian times up to "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" (1950, this being added out of sequence). Some of the others are "When You Wore A Tulip", "Take Me Out To the Ball Game", "My Wild Irish Rose", "If You Knew Susie", "Let Me Call You Sweetheart", "Heart of My Heart", "April Showers", "I Can't Give You Anything But Love", "S'Wonderful" "Side by Side", "Bye Bye Blackbird", and Al Frates' obvious favorite "Down by the Old Mill Stream"!

The time for live performances was passing, however. In 1922 the Club prepared to purchase its first radio, while an announcement of August 5, 1949, stated that "A very fine television set has been installed and is greatly enjoyed." Passive entertainment comes to the Old Colony Club!

NEXT ISSUE (MARCH, 1992):

Clubs and Personal Liberty, some more from Mrs. Diaz, and the New England Springtime.



GOING TO THE CLUB DECEMBER 22ND



OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 7

March, 1992

NEWS AND NOTES

We were once again fortunate that Forefathers' Morn was temperate, and the jovial marchers to Cole's Hill did not have to brave savage elements (as in '89). The membership, over 40 strong, marched briskly behind the musicians (who played several sets) down Court Street to North, and thence to Carver Street into the area near Massasoit. As the first light of dawn (rosy, yet!) came up over Manomet Point, President Frates read the traditional charge and the cannon sounded just as he finished -- an impressive if perhaps fortuitous bit of timing. The company then regrouped, and the decision was made to return by way of Leyden Street, so as to include the old line of march from Town Square north. So the company continued up Carver to Leyden Street and then the length of Main Street back to Court Street and the Club. It was observed that the march was accomplished without the attendance of the Plymouth police, for there was a line of puzzled motorists lingering behind as everyone filed into the Clubhouse for a welcome breakfast.

The Annual Meeting that evening went well also, and the succotash was well received. The speaker for the occasion was Nanepashemet (Head of the Wampanoag Program at Plimoth Plantation) who described life in the region *before* the original "Forefathers' Day" in 1620.

The greater part of this issue of the Papers has been extracted from previously published material. The decision to do this was partly the press of time (I have a great deal of writing for work to do) and partly because the selections are so appropriate for the issue at hand. The most important reason, however, is that going through old Club papers last November, I had some bright idea for an essay on "Clubs and Personal Freedom" but the inspiration has entirely disappeared now! It will appear if I can ever remember what I had in mind at that time.

The chief matters of concern of the membership who are concerned with the viability of the Club are not only the decreasing number of members, but more tellingly, the declining level of regular attendance. Several of the members we have lost over the last few years to nursing homes or worse were among the most loyal attendees. It is not enough just to be a member -- we must strive for active rather than passive support! See you Friday???

PAST PRESIDENT'S COLUMN WILLIAM D. SYKES 1985

William D. Sykes was born in Billerica, Massachusetts, to George and Matilda (Dimodana) Sykes on April 19, 1921, where he lived until he moved to Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1968. He attended Tufts College, Lowell Tech., and Northeastern University. He served four years in the Army Corps of Engineers and was a first sergeant during thirty-eight months of duty in the South Pacific. After the war he married Grace Eklund, a nurse from Dracut, Massachusetts. He joined General Electric Co. and worked in various technical jobs for sixteen years, before accepting a position with International Telephone and Telegraph Co. as Operations Manager for eight years. He then moved to Plymouth to start a new factory for Boston Insulated Wire and Cable Company in the old Plymouth Cordage complex in Building #2. This factory at its peak employed 180 people making highly technical electrical wires and cables. He retired from Boston Insulated Wire in 1986. He then joined the International Executive Service Corps, a volunteer organization that helps businesses in developing countries to modernize and increase employment, as a wire and cable specialist. Through this he and his wife Grace have travelled all over the world teaching management and technical subjects, in between these projects they have visited many countries as tourists.

Bill is Past President of the Plymouth Kiwanis Club; served on the Board of Directors of the Plymouth Philharmonic Orchestra, the Chamber of Commerce, Cura Nurses Association, the Jordan Hospital Advisory Board of Trustees; is member of the International Wire Association and a member of the Coalition of Reliable Energy.

Bill and Grace have five children: Cynthia (who cooks for the Club); Amy, of Ipswich, who is a trauma nurse; Bill (not Jr.), a member of the Club and bicycle shop owner in Plymouth; Ellen Adams, an Eye Surgeon's Assistant, whose husband Matt is a member of the Club and was chairman of the House Committee for several years; and George, of Falmouth, another bicycle shop owner.

THE HISTORY OF THE CLUB'S CANNON

The Club's cannon was built in 1982 and is a modified robbinette cannon whose design was taken from a book of cannons that Past President Walter Shobbrook ('87), who has done extensive research on antique armament, loaned to Clifford E. Sampson, Jr. To modify the design Clifford (C.E.) first searched New England for a pair

of suitable wagon wheels of the period of a robbinette. He finally found a pair of pony cart wheels in western Massachusetts. From the size of the wheels, he scaled all of the cannon measurements proportionally to the original cannon. He then made the carriage of oak, repaired and refitted the wheels and had the wrought iron hardware made and fitted. Past President George Davis ('60) supplied a bronze boat propeller shaft for the cannon which Robert Holton had turned in the Plymouth South High School shop. After the barrel was turned and the trunnions were installed it then had to be bored. This caused a serious problem because there appeared to be no way to hold the cannon barrel while boring an inch and an eighth hole without damaging the finished bronze exterior. Past President William D. Sykes ('85) took the barrel to several machine shops without success in having it bored. Finally he had an agent for a great number of shops in the State attempt to get it bored. After many weeks the agent found a shop which would attempt to do it, but with no guarantee. Luckily the shop did an excellent job. Bill then formed and attached the Club medallion, bored the touch hole and, with Walter, made the cannon tools. C.E. then completed the cannon.

Bob Holton and Walter were now ready to fire the gun. They tried to get permission from the Police Department to test fire it, but were refused. Bob then arranged to fire it off on the back forty of the Withington property off Jordan Road where a large group of members gathered on a Saturday to observe the firing by Cannoneers Bob Holton and Walter Shobbrook. They loaded the cannon with a black powder charge in cotton bags made by Mrs. Grace Sykes under Walt's direction, tamped in the newspaper wadding, inserted a foot-long fuse and then Walt lit it off. The crowd stood fifty feet away and then Bob and Walt ran twenty feet from the cannon. It finally went off with a mighty boom!!! Everyone cheered including Mr. Withington and his family. They loaded again and then everyone there knew we had a good cannon.

On December 22, 1982, the cannon was officially fired in Town Square during the Club's Forefathers' Day Celebration when President Chester Motyka dedicated it.

It was put on display in 1983 at the Plimoth Plantation¹ until the Fourth of July Parade. The cannon was mounted on Past President Robert McKenna's ('81) truck and was fired all along the parade route, which became a great attraction to the crowd. This practice was stopped by the police after Cannoneer Bob Holton was seriously injured during the July 4, 1990, parade when the cannon fired prematurely in front of the Club House

while he was loading it, blowing the ramrod across his hand. Subsequently the Club was not allowed to fire the cannon in Town Square again on Forefathers' Day, causing us to change our parade route to Cole's Hill overlooking Water Street where we are allowed to fire it.

The cannon is now only displayed on the truck in the Fourth of July parade, to the great disappointment of the people watching the parade. The Cannoneers Bob, Walt and Gray Perry are now all State-licensed cannoneers, having passed a rigorous test.

(by Bill Sykes)

THE NEW ENGLAND SPRING, OR, THE CAPRICE OF NATURE

It is about this time each year that those New Englanders who haven't given up and made their way to Florida begin to fantasize about SPRING. Like the maiden chained to the rock for the delectation of a hideous dragon, we await our annual St. George to release us from the bondage of Old Winter. Of course, there is a school of thought which holds that there isn't such a thing as "Spring" in New England at all, but rather a sort of indeterminate and above all *muddy* interval between High Winter and Early Summer, lacking all of the salutary characteristics of a true "Spring." Although something can be said for this line of reasoning in certain years, the hope for a season that the poets and essayists would recognize as spring runs deep in the hearts of all Yankees.

Perhaps one reason that we are sluggish in our perception of the arrival of spring is that we live in a indoor suburban age, where few people (except Tom Brewer, for example) have the energy or inclination to keep a close watch on the progress of Nature. During the last days of winter (which has thoroughly worn out its welcome by this time with everyone save skiers) that one strains to find some token sign of the impending transformation of the woods and fields, which will herald the arrival of springtime. Our most familiar signs, of cars that start easily and the lack of icy sidewalks, are not the only indications that the seasons are changing.

The earliest local flowers which herald spring are the hazel bushes and the lowly chickweed, which flower as the first robins redwing blackbirds, bluebirds and phoebes arrive. One of the earliest and most interesting of these natural omens is also among the first flowers of the season, the skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*). Their strange and hardy hollow purple spathes come up even through the melting snow in February, and like we ourselves, use their own central heating until the season is able to take over. This member of the Arum family is actually able to heat itself to an interior temperature of about 70⁰, apparently through some mechanism using salicylic acid (the basis of aspirin). The skunk cabbage is therefore the early bird when it comes to pollinating insects, who need this heat to get things under way.

¹ The cannon was borrowed by the Plantation for an exhibit, "Aye, Call It Holy Ground!", on the Victorian images of the Pilgrims. It was exhibited (with a top hat) to illustrate the importance of the Old Colony Club in Plymouth's Pilgrim traditions.

I think that the early New England spring has been well described by the nineteenth century nature essayist Rowland E. Robinson. Mr. Robinson heralded from Vermont where he was a farmer and outdoorsman during the second half of the last century. Although he describes Vermont in March (hence the maple sugarer and the "squirrel-cup" or hepatica, which are not found here in Plymouth), the picture is one we can all recognize:

MARCH DAYS

"Back and forth across the land, in swift and sudden alteration, the March winds toss days of bitter cold and days of genial warmth, now out of the eternal winter of the north, now from the endless summer of the tropics.

Repeating thawing and freezing has given the snow a coarse grain. It is like a mass of fine hailstones and with no hint of the soft and feathery flakes that wavered down like soft blossoms shed from the unseen bloom of some far-off upper world and that silently transformed unseemliness of the black and tawny earth into the beauty of immaculate purity.

One day, when the wind breathes from the south a continuous breath of warmth, your feet sink into this later coarseness come of its base earthly association, with a grinding slump, as in loose wet sand, so deep, perhaps, that your tracks are gray puddles, marking your toilsome way.

As you wallow on, or perch for a moment's rest on a naked fence-top among the smirched drifts, you envy the crows faring so easily along their aerial paths above you. How pleasant are the voices of these returning exiles, not enemies now, but friendly messengers, bring tidings of spring. You do not begrudge them the meagre feasts they find, the frozen apple still hanging, brown and wrinkled, in the bare orchard, or the winter-killed youngling of flock or herd, cast forth on a dunghill, and which discovered, one generous vagabond calls all his black comrades to partake of.

Watching as they lag across the sky, yet swifter than the white clouds that drift above them, you presently notice that these stand still, as you may verify by their blue shadows on the snow, lying motionless, with the palpitating shadows of the crows plunging into them on this side, then, lost for an instant in the blue obscurity, then, emerging on that side with the same untiring beat of shadowy wings. A puff of wind comes out of the north, followed by an angry gust, and then a howling wintry blast that the crows stagger against in labored flight as they make for the shelter of the woods.

You, too, toil to shelter and fireside warmth, and are thankful to be out of the biting wind and the treacherous footing. The change has come so suddenly that the moist, grainy snow is frozen before it has time to leach, and in a little while gives you a surface most delightful to walk upon, and shortens the distances to half what they were. It has lost its first pure whiteness wherewith no

other whiteness can compare, but it is yet beyond all things else, and in the sunlight dazzles you with a broad glare and innumerable scintillating points of light [shades of George Bush!], as intense as the sun itself.

The sunshine, the bracing air, the swaying boughs of the pines and hemlocks beckoning at the woodside, and the firm smooth footing, irresistibly invite you forth. Your feet devour the way with crisp bites, and you think that nothing could be more pleasant to them till you are offered a few yards of turf, laid bare by winds and sun, and then you realize that nothing is quite so good as the old stand-by, a naked ground, and crave more of it, even as this is, and hunger for it with its later garnishing of grass and flowers. The crows, too, are drawn to these bare patches and are busy upon them, and you wonder what they can find; spiders, perhaps, for these you may see in thawy days crawling sluggishly over the snow, where they must have come from the earth.

The woods are astir with more life than a month ago. The squirrels are busy and noisy, the chickadees throng about you, sometimes singing their sweet brief song of three notes; the nuthatches pipe their tiny trumpets in full orchestra, and the jays are clamoring their ordinary familiar cries with occasional notes that you do not often hear. One of these is a soft, rapidly uttered cluck, the bird all the time dancing with his body, but not with his feet, to his own music, which is pleasant to the ear, especially when you remember it is a jay's music, which in the main cannot be recommended. Today, doubtless, he is practicing the allurements of the mating season.

You hear the loud cackle of a logcock [pileated woodpecker] making the daily round of his preserves, but you are not likely to get more than a glimpse of his black plumage or a gleam of his blood-red crest.

By rare luck you may hear the little Acadian owl filing his invisible saw, but you are likelier to see him and mistake him for a clot of last year's leaves lodged midway in their fall to earth.

The forest floor, barred and netted with blue shadows of trunks and branches, is strewn with dry twigs, evergreen leaves, shards of bark, and shreds of tree-moss and lichen, with heaps of cone scales, - the squirrel's kitchen middens, - the sign of a partridge's nightly roosting, similar traces of the hare's moonlight wanderings, and perhaps a fluff of his white fur, showing where his journeys have ended forever in a fox's maw.

Here and there the top of a cradle knoll crops out of the snow with its patches of green moss, sturdy upright stems and red berries of the wintergreen, as fresh as when the first snow covered them, a rusty trail of mayflower leaves, and the flat-pressed purple lobes of squirrelcup with a downy heart of buds full with the promise of spring.

The woods are filled with a certain subtle scent quite distinct from a very apparent resinous and balsamic aroma of the evergreens, that eludes description, but as a kind of freshness that tickles the nose with a longing for a

more generous waft of it. You can trace it to no source, as you can the odors of the pine and the hemlocks or the sweet fragrance of the boiling sap, coming from the sugar-maker's camp with a pungent mixture of wood-smoke. You are also aware that the skunk has been abroad, that reynard is somewhere to windward, and by an undescribed, generally recognized, pungency in the air that a gray squirrel lives in your neighborhood. Yet among all these more potent odors you still discover this subtle exhalation, perhaps of the earth filtered upward through the snow, perhaps the first awakening breath of the deciduous trees.

Warmer shines the sun and warmer blows the wind from southern seas and southern lands. More and more the tawny earth comes in sight among puddles of melted snow, which bring the mirrored sky and its fleecy flocks of clouds, down into the bounds of fields. The brooks are alive again and babbling noisily over their pebbled beds, and the lake, hearing them, groans and cries for deliverance from its prison of ice.

On the marshes you may find the ice shrunken from the shores and an intervening strip of water where the muskrat may see the sun and stars again. You hear the trumpets of the wild geese and see the gray battalion riding northward on the swift wind.

The sun and the south wind, which perhaps bears some faint breath of stolen fragrance from far-off violet banks, tempt forth the bees, but they find no flowers yet, not even a squirrelcup or willow catkin, and can only make the most of the fresh sawdust by the wood-pile and the sappy ends of ample logs.

Down from the sky, whose livery he wears and whose song he sings, comes the heavenly carol of the bluebird; the song sparrow trills his cheery melody; the first robin is announced to-day, and we cry, 'Lo, spring has come.' But tomorrow may come winter and longer waiting."

(From: Rowland E. Robinson, *In New England Fields and Woods*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1896.)

MRS. DIAZ CONTINUED

In the September, 1991, issue, we included some selections from Mr. Abby Morton Diaz's article in the *New England Magazine*.

Following the previous entry, the author continues:

"... Residents who grudge the time spent in travel sometimes express a half-earnest regret that the Pilgrims had not landed nearer Boston. More, however, rejoice that Plymouth was thus preserved from becoming a "laid-out" suburb, and allowed to keep its by-ways, and alleys, and hayfields, and huckleberry hills, in peace. Every appreciative tourist must feel grateful to them for landing so near the centre of the town."

[Although much of Mrs. Diaz's open Plymouth landscape survived into the 1950s, how far we have gone towards the suburb she deplored, with the concomitant loss of the open fields and berry hills, since then! She then digresses over the authenticity of the Rock, the shore below Manomet Point and the shortages of colonial times before returning to Town and Burial Hill, where she once again encounters an Ancient Inhabitant, whose plaint could almost be echoed by old people to-day.]

"I doubt if the reign of plenty began much before the time of the ancient Unknown yonder who, in common with the idle tourist, frequents these graveyard paths. Latterly he recognizes me. The aged are garrulous. Questioning may draw out somewhat of interest.

'Good morning, my friend. I often see you sitting here.'

'Yes; I do have a habit of coming.'

'Because you like the sadness of the place?'

'Well -- no -- no; I am a good ways beyond anything of that sort; but since you ask, I will say that I come up here to think over my thoughts and to look off on the salt water. All my family have passed on, and I have no young ties to join me in with this new generation. You may smile, but I seem to myself to be shed off and left all by myself, and I mostly take my cane, -- for that seems companionable-like, I've known it so long, -- and go strolling about among the old landmarks, what are left of them, - and I live over the days of my youth; and somehow the times that I did live in, and take part in, and good, strong part, too, seem more reality to me than these I've no part in. There's a kind of dulness to these times. Everything is right to your hand. Seems there's nothing doing in these times.'

'But, my friend, you must allow there's something doing in the way of pleasuring.'

~ Yes -- yes; I've looked in at their dancing. Just a kind of standing up to the rest and a shoving the feet along. No Nancy Dillard singing, 'Now-a is the set-part, set-part, set-part; Now-a is the turn-part, turn part, turn-part,' and 'Dance up to Rushy Cobbin Barnes,' 'Dance up to the girl in the blue short apron.' No stepping out of tune, and the most they *try* to do is to keep out of one another's way. You'd have been pleased to see the times we used to have up at Cornish's Tavern;² the Thanksgiving parties and the Forefathers' parties! That was live fun! But everything is duller nowadays. Even in the schools 'tis drone, drone, drone. You don't see the rulers flying. And the meeting-houses are dull; no daylight let in; no rousing kind of sermons that used to keep everybody awake day and night. And the pulpit, and the ministers, too, right down among the people.'

² Cornish's Tavern was located on Old Sandwich Road in a Cape Cod house still standing today just north of the junction of Sandwich Road and Beaver Dam Road.

'What you just said, my friend, in regard to reality is in the line of my own thought. Life must have had a sterner reality and brought deeper lessons when daily needs demanded immediate effort.'

'Stranger, you speak truth. What they got to eat had to be clutched right out of the ground or out of the water, and it was so up in our neighborhood even within my own remembrance. whoever wanted clothes, why, there was your flax and your flock o' sheep, and you could pull and shear and card and spin and weave, or do with fewer clothes. When you wanted bread, there was your ground, and you could plant and hoe and reap, or starve. When it came to sweetenin', why, they did have to buy their sweetenin', but if you wanted meat you had to raise it, and do your own killing, or else hire it done. For fish there was the catching, and for clams there was the digging, and for eels there was the bobbing. In our family, father made scythe-handles and other tool-handles. Mother she carded and spun and wove, and made up cloth, and the children made wooden buttons and lead inkstands and run over the bent-up pewter spoons in a mould. Grandmother used the same pins to pin her clothes together for years. The shoemaker made his rounds from house to house, making up shoes for winter wear. All the boys and girls in our neighborhood, and a good many men, went barefooted in the summer; rain or shine, they had to put God's leather to God's weather. More for women to do than there is now? Well -- more, and less. Time was used up then, and 'tis used up now. Then it was spinning and weaving; now 'tis piano-playing and going to picnics. They would have though very poorly of carrying their victuals out of doors and spreading them out on the ground. It takes more time to make a gown now than it took then to make the cloth and the gown. Half a day did very well for making one, and the regular price was twenty-five cents a day, work till eight o'clock. My sister learned the mantua-maker's³ trade. In one family, the best off in this town, the woman was as close as the bark of a tree. She used to hire Prudy for half a day, and thread up a whole pincushion full of needles, to save her taking a rest between daylight and dark.

'Ah, friend, I see that human nature was the same in your day as now.'

'Oh, no! Right-down honesty was of a good deal more account. Children were instructed in honesty. Once when I was a little boy I picked up a piece of chalk off a carpenter's bench and carried it home, thinking to please my mammy. 'Go straight back and put that piece of chalk where you found it,' she said. 'Never take a pin's worth that is not your own.' I carried that chalk all the way back, but the 'Never take a pin's worth' stayed by me. One old schoolma'am, when children told lies, used to

put red pepper on their tongues. It was kept up in a little cupboard that had a dimity curtain to it. And when they took things not their own, she would hold their fingers over live coals and say, 'Tis hotter than that in hell.' Mostly some widow woman kept the school, right in her living-room, so the children had something to take up their minds, watching what was being cooked. Schooling was ninepence a week, and carry a stick of firewood every day. It was after my mother grew up that girls were let go to the public schools. They went after the boys were dismissed, and stayed one hour, but there was a great outcry that the girls would be getting more learning than they needed.'

'...Sundays we boys at home used to stand by the westerly window when it was time for Sunday to abate, and watch the sun go down. Then we could walk out.⁴ My mother would never have thought of such a thing as stepping out-doors on the Sabbath, other than to go to meeting, not even into her flower-garden. Nobody would ever touch a flower to break it off, Sabbath-day! And father -- father -- why, I don't believe that my father's eyes could ever have closed again if they looked off on the salt water and seen the boats getting under weigh one after another, as they do now, soon as there's tide enough, as if they'd been waiting. Why, you don't know what an unheard-of thing it was for any decent body to go on the salt water of a Sabbath day.'

'Your tides here -- they must be a nuisance. What a pity the harbor is not always full!'

'Stranger, you're off soundings there. We'd miss the tides dreadfully. I presume to say there's no time in the day that I don't know whether the tide is coming or going. If there's a tempest a-brewing, we look to see if the tide will bring the cloud over. My poor wife used to take a sight o' comfort watching the tide creeping up the channels and all the little guzzels. She said it 'twas like one of the family coming and going. And 'twas waited for like one of the family. She had her meals according as the boats had to start, or as the tide would bring them in. She used to admire to sit and watch the boats. We had to catch rain water, and if the sky looked lowery, she used to say, 'Tide at flood, set your tub. Tide at ebb, go to bed.' When we'd 'set up leach'⁵ to make some soap, the soap's 'coming' depended on the tide's coming; and if anyone was near death, they'd say 'He'll go out with the tide.' Why, in old times the tide, and the almanac, and the moon, and the Bible and Catechism were what people lived by. Dates of what had taken place, or was to take place, settling wages, all were put down on the edges of the almanac leaves, and the almanac told all about the moon, and the moon was a great dependence; for

3 A Mantua-maker simply means a dress maker, the term being derived from a particular loose gown made of Mantua silk from the late 17th century through the 18th.

4 The Sabbath in old times lasted from about sundown Saturday evening to sundown Sunday, hence the many 'eves' (Hallow'een, Christmas Eve) in the old calendar.

5 Leaching was to drain water through hardwood ashes to get lye to convert fat to soap.

lighting up the roads had not come into fashion then, and moonlight was made much of. Why, everybody knew when there was a new moon, for 'twas a kind of a friend in need. She isn't so much account now, without 'tis to tell the weather by.'

'I suppose fishing is the business of your town?'

'No; not now. Factories -- factories for shoes, nails, tacks, rivets, hats, duck, bedstead joints, and what not. These fill up the place with strangers. Time was when you'd know everybody that passed your window, either by their own looks or their family looks. Everything is changed. The town used to carry on a great business by its fishing-vessels. To build them employed ships-carpenters and riggers and caulkers and sailmakers. Then they had to be provisioned and manned. They sailed in the spring for the Grand Banks and came back in the fall with fish split and packed in salt. You might like to hear about it. The first thing was to 'water-horse' the fish. At full of the tide they dumped them into the water by truck-loads, to wash the salt off, then spread them on the flakes to dry.⁶ At night they yaffled them up in piles. When they were 'made,' they stacked them away under cover, and the same vessels loaded up with dry fish and went south and brought back southern goods for the stores. Fish flakes used to spread along shore from

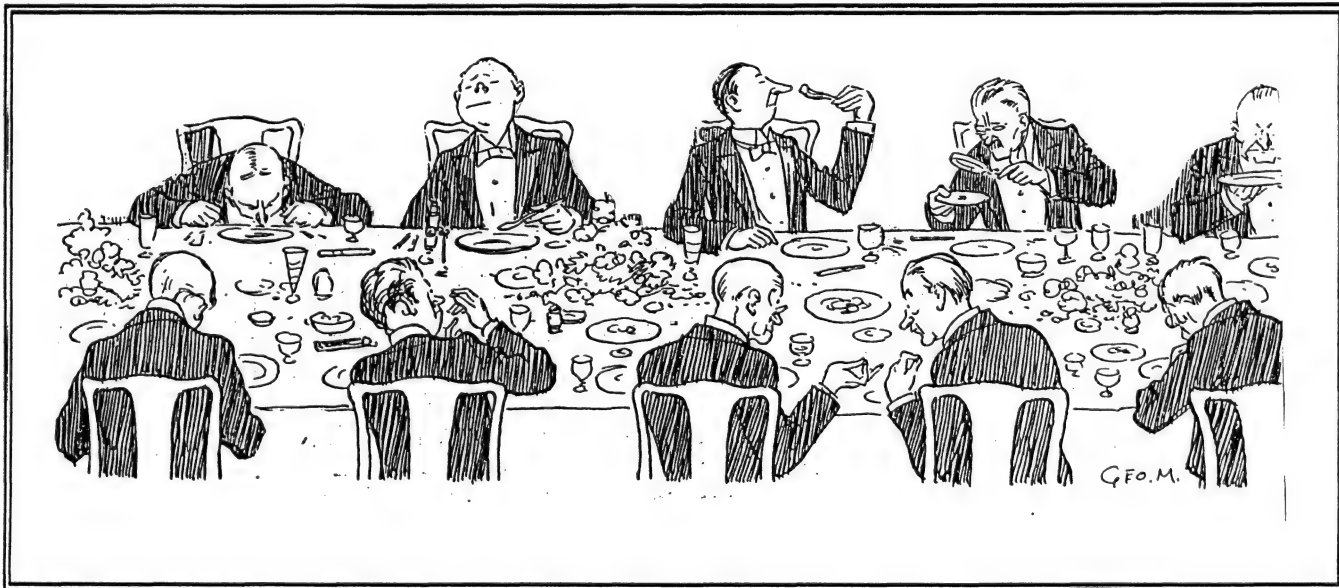
Town Brook way past Doten's and Stephen's and Tweenit and Hobbshole and Eelriver. In the spring o' the year men used to come from up country and from Cedar Swamp and Manomet Ponds and away down past Cornish's to ship. Now there's hardly a flake to be seen, nor a good sniff of salt fish drying. Old Mother Brewer used to say that, *after the first fortnight*, she would board a Pondsman as cheap as she would anybody."

[from Abby M. Diaz, "A Plymouth Pilgrimage",
New England Magazine Sept. 1889, p. 11 - 13, 15
- 16]

6 Flakes were grids made from sticks or slats set up about waist-high on posts, on which the rinsed fish was placed to dry. As Mrs. D. says, these used to cover the shore from "Doten's" (wharf - the present Yacht Club) to "Stephen's" (wharf, foot of Stephen's Lane) to Tweenit (area near Winter St.), Hobbshole and towards the mouth of Eel River. "Eelriver" is the old name for Chiltonville.

NEXT ISSUE (JUNE, 1992):

Old Plymouth's Gaol Bounds, The Pilgrims in Art, and other topics.



The House Committee has noted some criticism of the cuisine...



OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 8

June, 1992

NEWS AND NOTES

It's been a long cold wait for summer this year; quite the opposite of last year when we were actually issued a season between Winter and Summer that wasn't just mud and wind. However, it is always a good season on Friday nights at the old Club.

We are now enjoying the new curtains and other improvements in the Social Room area courtesy of Lionel Fortini and Bill Sykes. Upstairs a tradition dear to the hearts of our fellow clubmen of England has been installed; a dartboard. This was done through the industry and generosity of Gary Walsh. There has been the usual puffing and blowing about who can beat who at this game, and some dispute about the regulation distance from the line on the floor, all of which we trust will enliven the competitive natures of our more sporting members.

The passing of an Old Colony culinary era occurred with the retirement of Cindy Sykes in April, but we are being very well cared for by our new cook, Jenny Carlson.

The May meeting focussed on the need for extensive repairs to the Clubhouse. The Executive Committee put forward a plan to borrow up to \$10,000 for the purpose and urged all members to donate as freely as they are able to this necessary expenditure.

THE OLD COLONY CLUB DESK

Among the papers in our "archives", there is an interesting letter from a Russell S. Goldstein (of the *Russgold Sporting Co.*), dated June 27, 1958. Mr. Goldstein writes: "I recently purchased a mahogany desk with 'To Dr. Lazarus Le Baron from his friends in the Old Colony Club, Dec. 18, 1769, Plymouth, Mass.' engraved on the fall-board escutcheon. I purchased the desk at the auction of the late R. I. Supreme Court Judge Elmer J. Rathbrim. The desk came from his estate. I am enclosing a picture of the desk from the estate auction circular. I would appreciate it if you could give me any information about Dr. Le Baron, the desk, the presentation, etc."

There isn't a copy of a reply to Mr. Goldstein's letter, and I suspect no one then knew about the presentation, as there is no information about it in the records. We

are however indebted to Mr. G. for making us aware of this interesting relic of the early days of the Club. Too bad the Club wasn't able to acquire it for our collection, although I expect even in 1958, the cost of the rather fine looking 18th century desk would have been beyond the resources of our membership.

We can say something about Dr. Lazarus LeBaron, however. Although he was not a member of the Old Colony Club (perhaps because of his age - 71 - the Club was a young man's organization in the 18th century), he was an honored guest at its annual meetings, and made the Club the generous donation of Gov. Bradford's original chair for the President to sit in. When the Club broke up in 1773, the chair reverted to the LeBaron family and today is in Pilgrim Hall.

Dr. LeBaron was born in Plymouth in 1698, the son of Dr. Francis LeBaron, a famous and romantic character in Plymouth legend, who was the subject of Jane G. Austin's local historical novel, The Nameless Nobleman (1888). The elder Dr. LeBaron was a surgeon who had been on a French privateer from Bordeaux that was shipwrecked in Buzzard's Bay in 1696. While the doctor was a prisoner in Boston the Town of Plymouth, which was without a physician, petitioned to have him released on the condition that he settle in Plymouth. He did, and married Mary Wilder but died in 1704 at age 36.

His son Lazarus also went into medicine and became one of Plymouth's leading 18th century citizens. He lived on Leyden St., on the east side of LeBaron's Alley, which was opened on property his son Isaac LeBaron gave the Town in 1832. Dr. Lazarus was also the subject of one of Mrs. Austen's historical novels -- Dr. LeBaron and His Daughters (1890).

PILGRIMS IN ART

The Pilgrims are well known to us through the innumerable books and articles on Plymouth Colony that have been written over the past four centuries. The various museums and re-enacted events that Plymouth offers provide an alternative approach to the printed dissemination of the Pilgrim Story. In addition to the history of the Pilgrims (the actual or interpreted facts of the past), there is a rich body of Pilgrim stories and legends which further embroider on the basic narrative. All of these develop and extend our personal impressions of who the Pilgrims were and what they did.

Yet possibly the first thing that comes to mind when we consider the Pilgrims is what they look like. Show people figures in tall buckled hats or small bonnets, wearing somber clothes with prim white collars and cuffs and lank Dutch boy cuts, and they predictably identify them as "Pilgrims."



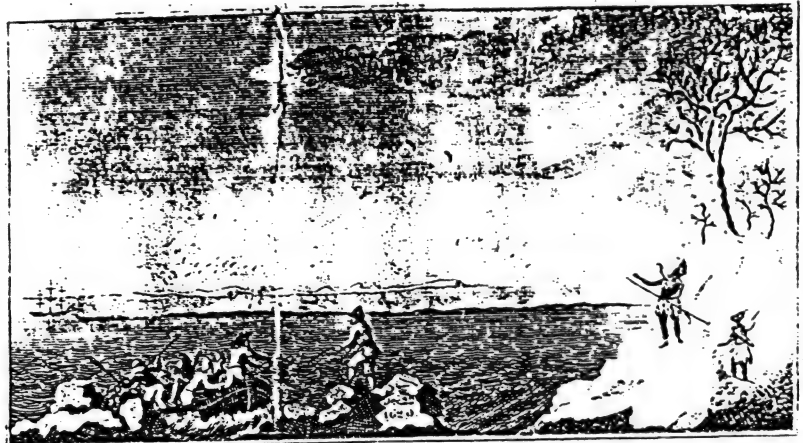
They expect these Pilgrims to be accoutered with blunderbusses and spinning wheels or accompanied by unsuspecting turkeys. Everyone can recognize a Pilgrim, even when their knowledge of Plymouth history story is a nothing more than a confused collage of Thanksgiving, the Mayflower, "1620", Plymouth Rock and so forth. Yet even as we easily recall or recognize these images, we are simultaneously aware that there problems of accuracy in these familiar representations. People are quick to say that they know that "they really wore brightly colored clothes and weren't sober-sided killjoys." There are not only very strong culturally shared impressions about what "Pilgrims" look like, but also equally strong conflicts between the stereotype and what passes for historic accuracy.

The staying power of the familiar images is impressive. No one living has ever actually seen a Pilgrim, and there is only a single contemporary illustration of one, Edward Winslow, which was done 30 years after the famous Landing on the Rock. Nevertheless everyone thinks they know what Pilgrims look like. How did this come about?

Visual consciousness of the past really began in the 18th century. Until then, artists who wanted to represent the past seldom made it look very different from their own era. They might put Biblical characters into a sort of stylized robe-like costume, but for the greater part people assumed that there was no important visual difference between the past and the present. Culture was considered to be a timeless continuum; part of the greater Christian drama in which the modes and manners of ancient times were for all intentions the same as their own, save some few unimportant variations.

This concept of the immutable duration of history, which made it possible to seriously advocate a return to the practices of the New Testament Christians or the Classical Greeks in the Reformation and the Renaissance, also prevented artists from depicting the past as visually different. However, just as the Renaissance introduced visual perspective in art, the Enlightenment developed the concept of progress and the perception of change over time.

It took some time for this effect to become generally accepted. The earliest artistic representations of the Pilgrims provide a very good example of this. The first American representation of the Pilgrims was a small print by Samuel Hall of the 1620 Landing for a Forefathers' Day dinner invitation issued by the Boston-based "Sons of the Pilgrims" around 1800.



This print had an amazing vitality -- it became the basis for the Corne painting in Pilgrim Hall and the Bartoll fireboard in Salem. Sent to China, it was reproduced as reverse paintings on glass for Yankee sailors, while in England it was put by the Enoch Wood company on the 1820 commemorative plates and pitchers. It also displays the old disregard for change over time. In the Hall engraving and all of the pictures it inspired, the figures landing on the Rock are contemporary late 18th century sailors, while the Mayflower looks like a frigate of Revolutionary times, and the Indians that are passively witnessing the event look like cigar-store figures. There is no intent to differentiate 1620 from 1800, or to make the Pilgrims look like, well, "Pilgrims." It simply didn't occur to the artists that this was possible or desirable.

However, the new perception of the past was making progress at the same time, even with the Pilgrims. The huge studio canvas painted by Henry Sargent of the Landing of the Pilgrims circa 1812 (a copy of which is in Pilgrim Hall today) shows a distinct effort at depicting the past as distinct from the present.



EMBARKATION OF THE PILGRIMS FROM DELFT HAVEN JULY 22, 1620

Although the costumes are stagey -- more picturesque than historical -- Sargent demonstrates a new consciousness about historical representation. As the Victorian genre of historical painting evolved, more and more effort was put into accurately representing the Pilgrims. Old paintings and woodcuts of the (usually later) 17th century were examined to improve the authenticity of costuming and furnishings. By the time Robert Weir was painting the Embarkation at Delftshaven for the Capitol Building in Washington, or Charles Cope created his Sailing of the Mayflower for the House of Lords, in Westminster, the capacity for historical detail had reached a level of considerable sophistication.



Although the depictions tended to portray the dress and accouterments of perhaps a more wealthy class than our Pilgrims (because available surviving 17th century portraits were generally of people of that level of status), the period feel was far more accurate than before, or -- ironically -- what would come later.

It is interesting to observe that the early Victorian rendering of the Pilgrims, which took pains to use more or less period examples of costume, was usually quite colorful, and seldom had the stereotyped buckles and sober suits. If we only knew the Pilgrims from the naive art of Hall or Corne, or from the earlier Victorians such as Weir or Cope, we would never recognize the familiar images we now know to be Pilgrims. However, there were other artistic efforts at work besides the work of the serious historical painters to depict the Pilgrims. By the

middle of the 19th century, the Pilgrims had become so familiar and popular a story that an inevitable process of simplification and stereotyping began. The new fashion for illustrated magazines and newspapers called for simpler and more easily recognized images to tell the Pilgrim story. In addition, Pilgrim caricatures and cartoons began to appear which required a sort of symbolic shorthand to make the point that the figures shown were indeed Pilgrims.

It is at this point that the familiar Pilgrims appear. An important influence was a change in contemporary fashion. Even when there is a concerted towards accuracy, every period is doomed to recreate the past (and even more so, the future) in its own image. The earlier Victorians had favored colorful, even loud colors and patterns in men's dress. After the mid-century the black and white style we associate with, for example, Abraham Lincoln took over in respectable wear for much of the remainder of the century. Men wore tall black hats and dark suits with a mid-thigh length frock coat, which were relieved by a bit of white linen only at the collar and cuffs. This same pattern, with a wider brimmed hat and a number of buckles, became the standard gear of Pilgrim propriety. Equally demure Pilgrim women, if slightly more colorful in the paintings of Pilgrim artist extraordinary George Boughton, nevertheless had the lines of simple Victorian costume sans bustles and other furbelows.



By the turn of the century, buckles, blacks and greys predominate. The cartoon Pilgrim/Puritan had become a standard image in the popular press. There was no difference between these two factions in the common mind despite the sometimes hysterical attempts on the part of Pilgrim partisans to differentiate their heroes from the grim stereotype of the joyless Puritans. The Pilgrims

were becoming mere caricatures, sharing with other such images such as witches and Santa Claus their buckles and slightly unreal archaic dress.



Since that time a revisionist movement has, as we noted earlier, freed them from the somber colors, but the buckles, bonnets and other necessary archaic features remain. Despite some strenuous efforts by costume researchers (at Plimoth Plantation), the basic Pilgrim image has become a fixture in our understanding. The best example of this, besides the perennial pictures and construction paper hats school children are furnished with each November, is the reaction the Disney Epcot Center had to the Plantation's effort at rectifying Pilgrim dress. The Epcot people, about to accouter a Pilgrim manikin in an exhibit, called the Plantation and asked for appropriate costume patterns. These were duly sent, only to be rejected. "We can't outfit our figures with the designs you sent," they explained, "no one will know they are Pilgrims!" Thus the artistic representations of the Pilgrims have become so potent that even thoroughly researched historical accuracy has no appeal in the face of popular preconception. After all, as the Disney group indicated, only with very particular images can we "know they are Pilgrims."

THE HISTORICAL CLUB GAVEL

It is unfortunate that the Club has not retained many relics of the 18th century membership, such as the LeBaron desk. However, there is one artifact in our collections which apparently survives from the original Club. As most members may have noticed, there is a curious old gavel preserved in a glass case in the entry way. This is one of the few original items we have left. There is a letter from Past President George Simons relating the story of the gavel that the membership might find interesting:

"Mr. Warren P. Strong
Secretary Treasurer
Old Colony Club
Plymouth, Mass.

Niagara Falls, N.Y.
May 4th, 1927.

Dear Sir;

I had expected to report the facts set forth in this letter, at one of the Club meetings, but as I am not likely to be in Plymouth before some time in July, I will ask you to read the following at any meeting that may be held prior to my return.

In the minutes of a meeting in the early days of the Old Colony Club there is, I believe, the description of a silver plate bearing the emblem of the Club. This disappeared, presumably about the time of the Revolutionary war or shortly thereafter.

During the past three years, I have not exactly hoped, but have entertained the thought, that I might, by some strange chance, stumble onto the old relic, if it is still in existence, and return it to the Club. In furtherance of this thought I have looked into many pawn shops, second hand stores, antique emporiums and also a number of collections of old silver. I have mentioned this to but one member of the Club and to him only in confidence. Up to this time I am sorry to have to report that my efforts have been unsuccessful.

The owner of a collection of early American silver, said that while he was not able to render any assistance in respect to the plate, that he did know of a man who had a little hammer or gavel that had been in the possession of his family for three or four generations, and that the story that had been handed down with it was that it had at one time belonged to 'the old Club' at Plymouth, Mass. I got the name and address and traveled quite a long distance to see the man. He had an old gavel, the head of which was made of a strip of raw hide of some animal. The strip had been rolled into cylindrical form, evidently while the hide was green, and was held in shape by a couple of rivets. There was only a piece of broken handle. This had been whittled out [sic] of a piece of pine and quite evidently was no part of the original. The man said that he could well remember the gavel in his fathers home, as a small boy, and that it was said to have belonged to 'the old Club at Plymouth.' I asked him if he was willing to sell it and he replied he was not. I told him about our old Club, its historic background and how it was keeping alive the traditions and spirit of Americanism. He seemed interested and finally said that while he would not sell the gavel he thought it was rather his duty to return it to the Club and that he would do so on one condition and that was that his name was not to be divulged. He seemed to think that he and his family would be open to criticism for not having made return of the gavel long ago. I replied to this that I did not think that there would be any such criticism but that on the contrary I thought the Club would not only be grateful to

him but that they would likely vote him honorary membership. He said he was too old to be joining Clubs and so, in the name of the Club, I thanked him for what he had done and brought the gavel home. The rivets do not appear to be any too secure and it is my purpose, at my own expense, to have a couple of silver bands put around the head. I have already had a new handle put in it. I will also have it suitably marked on the silver bands. It will hereafter be the insignia of the president of the Club. The Secretary will be its proper custodian.

I think I should say that the man who so kindly returns the gavel to us is a man of over 70 years old. He lives in another State. He was never a member of the Old Colony Club and so far as he knows neither his father or grand father was in any way connected with it. His father did reside in Massachusetts for a few years but his antecedents were in the vicinity of Hartford, Conn. he is a widower, his wife and children having all died several years ago and that may have contributed in a large measure to his willingness to return the gavel. All of this came out in my conversation with him.

So far as I know there is nothing in the records of the Club that will, in any way, confirm this story or identify the gavel as a former belonging [This is the case. JWB] However it is not at all strange that a gavel is not mentioned in the old minutes. This one is evidently "home made" and quite likely was made by one of the Club members and the circumstance was not, at that time, of sufficient importance to be made a matter of record. Anyhow here it is and the evidence is all affirmative. George Gray can open my clothes closet at the Club and the gavel will be found in a box on the right hand shelf. I have not yet given up all hope of locating the plate. If it is still in existence, it is probably in the Province of Quebec. I have a new plan for trying to locate it.

Very truly yours,
Geo. H. Simons

PLYMOUTH'S OLD GAOL AND ITS BOUNDS

In part of Mrs. Diaz's text that I omitted, her old confidant mentions the "Debtors' Bounds": "Debtors' Bounds? Oh, that was how far the debtors in jail could walk out."¹ Debtors were not considered dangerous prisoners, and were allowed what today would be unusual freedom to spent their days (they had to lodge in the prison at night) within a certain fixed area outside of the jail itself. I happen to have a copy of the "Gaol Limits" as they were set for Plymouth in 1823, following the construction of the new jail behind Court Square. As this might be of historical interest to the Club (which is within the old bounds), I am reproducing the document

on the last page of this issue of the Occasional Papers instead of the usual cartoon.

The Town of Plymouth had its jail for (primarily) debtors, just as Dickens' London did. Plymouth's first "gaol" (ca. 1641) was at the foot of Summer Street on the corner of Market Street, and the bounds were marked from there. The question of the location of the gaol or prison is disputed; Thatcher stating that it was near Prison Brook (a small stream issuing from Murdock's Pond and entering Town Brook just below Newfield Street), and Davis insisting it was on the corner of Summer Street. Apparently however, a new gaol was built in what is now Court Square in 1778 (preceding the current Court House and Jail, both built in 1820), and the Debtors bounds extended around it.

I have made a crude attempt to trace the old bounds, to show where the improvident members of the community were given their "liberty" while under the auspices of the Court. The bounds begin at the Court House in Town Square. The line crosses the Square and the Congregational Church lot and proceeds behind the houses on Main St., then crosses Main St. at about where the "Mug & Muffin" is today. It then proceeds along the east side of Main St. and down the south side of Middle St. to about LeBaron's Alley where it crosses Middle St. and continues north along Spooner's Alley to North St. Crossing North St., it goes west to about where the new parking lot is, then proceeds north (Brewster St. not being laid out yet) to a ropewalk below a lane (now Howland St.) leading to Court St. Turning north along the east side of Court St. until just before Chilton St., where it crosses Court St. and proceeds roughly through "Maggie's Pub" to continue west to about Allerton St. which was then a boundary of a pasture. It gets even rougher from here (none of the current streets or lots then existed) but it appears to cross Thomas St. and go down across Stoddard St., then go south perhaps along Peter Gomes' property to High St, then skirts the south side of Burial Hill back to where it all began at the Court House.

It was within this part of town, with the jail at the center, that the debtors and other unfortunates were allowed to loiter. In these days of Recession, this should be an object lesson...

NEXT ISSUE (SEPTEMBER, 1992):

Plymouth: The Resort Town; 100 Years on Court Street, Guides to Plymouth, and More.

¹ Abby M. Diaz, "A Plymouth Pilgrimage", *New England Magazine* Sept. 1889, p. 13.

GAOL LIMITS.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PLYMOUTH, SS. COURT OF SESSIONS, AUGUST TERM, 1823.

THE Court on the fourteenth day of said month, being the ninth day of said Term, and the first meeting of said Court after the first day of April, 1823, at three o'clock P. M. determined and established the Gaol or Prison Yard in the County of PLYMOUTH, as follows, to wit.

PLYMOUTH, SS. AUGUST TERM, 1823.

The Court of Sessions of the County of Plymouth do order and adjudge, that the limits and boundaries of the Gaol Yard for said county, be, and the same are hereby established as follows, viz. Beginning at the southeast corner of the Gaol, and from thence running south forty-seven degrees east fifty rods, to the northeast corner of the old court house, where said corner connects with the Market House; thence northerly, on a straight line across the Town Square to the southwest corner of a house owned by LeBaron Bradford, and now improved by William S. Russell; thence northerly, by the west end of said house, to the northwest corner thereof, thence northwesterly, on a straight line, to the southwest corner of the garden belonging to the heirs of Thomas Wethrell, deceased; thence northwesterly, by said garden as the fence now stands, to the garden of Zacheus Bartlett, thence northeasterly by said Bartlett's garden fence to the southwest corner of said Bartlett's dwelling house, thence northeasterly, by the southerly side of said Bartlett's house, to the southeast corner thereof; thence northerly, on a straight line crossing the Main street, to the southwest corner of Samuel Davis' shop, now improved by Isaac LeBaron; thence northwesterly, by the east side of the Main street as the buildings and fences now stand, to the northwest corner of Barnabas Hedge's shop, now improved by Bartlett Ellis; thence in a straight line northeasterly, by the south side of Middle street as the buildings and fences now stand, to the northwest corner of the land belonging to the First Parish in Plymouth; thence crossing said Middle street in a straight line to the southeast corner of James Thacher's barn, now improved by George Drew; thence northwesterly by the west side of the house lot belonging to the heirs of George Watson, deceased, as the buildings and fences now stand, to the northwest corner of said lot on the North street; thence crossing said street in a straight line northerly to the southwest corner of Barnabas Hedge's house now improved by Isaac L. Hedge; thence northerly, by the west end of said house, to the northwest corner of the same; thence northwesterly, by said Hedge's yard and garden fence, to the northeast corner of the garden belonging to the heirs of Lewis Weston, deceased, now improved by Benjamin Weston; thence westerly, by said garden fence, to the southwest corner of the Rope-Walk belonging to Thomas and William Jackson; thence northwesterly, by the westerly side of said Rope-Walk, to the lane leading from said Rope-Walk westerly to Court street; thence westerly by the south side of said lane, as the buildings and fences now stand, to the northwest corner of the house which Freeman Bartlett holds in right of his wife; thence northwesterly, across said lane, to the southwest corner of Barnabas Holmes' house; thence northwesterly, by the east side of said Court street as the buildings and fences now stand, to the northwest corner of the house lately owned and now improved by William Drew; thence westerly, across said Court street on a straight line, to the northeast corner of Thomas Nelson's dwelling house; thence westerly, on a straight line, to the northeast corner of LeBaron's pasture, so called now owned by Nathaniel Russell; thence southwesterly by the fence between said pasture and land belonging to the heirs of Richard Holmes, twenty-one rods to a round post, painted white; thence south twenty-two degrees west, across the northwesterly corner of said LeBaron's pasture, to William Goodwin's land to a round post painted white; thence southeasterly by said Goodwin's land and the west end of a lot owned by John B. Thomas, and now improved by Nathaniel Thomas, to the southwest corner of said Thomas' lot; thence southeasterly, in a straight line across the lane leading to Murdock's Pond, to land belonging to the heirs of Joshua Thomas, deceased, to a round post painted white; thence easterly by the said land belonging to the heirs of Joshua Thomas, deceased, to the northwest corner of LeBaron Bradford's land; thence southerly, as the fence now stands between said Bradford and Joshua Thomas heirs' land to the northwesterly corner of land belonging to Sophia Drew, wife of Benjamin Drew; thence northeasterly, by said Sophia Drew's land as the fence now stands to the Burying Hill; thence southeasterly and easterly as the fence of the said Burying Hill now stands, to the southeast corner of said Burying Hill; thence southeasterly, on a straight line, to the northwest corner of Joseph Cooper's store; thence northeasterly on a straight line, to the northwest corner of the old court house; thence easterly, by the front of said old court house, to the northeast corner thereof first mentioned.

All the lands and buildings, within the aforesaid limits and boundaries, shall constitute the Gaol or Prison Yard.

True copy of record,

Attest,

JOHN B. THOMAS, *Clerk.*



OLD COLONY CLUB OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No. 9

September, 1992

NEWS AND NOTES

The Club has had a good summer with the exception of the Membership crisis! This year's resignations have left the membership rolls at an all-time low - there are now only 74 members in good standing, which is insufficient to guarantee the economic viability of the Old Colony Club as we all know it. Attendance at meetings and the introduction of new members are therefore vital needs for the ensuing months. Please help by coming by on Friday nights as often as possible (especially you recent members who we have never gotten to know), and try to think of good, clubable and reliable (i.e., active) candidates for membership that can be proposed.

The annual Jabez Corner Chowder Club nights (Wednesdays, July 8 and 22) brought out a lot of hungry members and their guests, and incidentally made the Club a modest amount of income. Jim Baker's chowder and salad were well received, and they were enthusiastically endorsed by the official Club Chowder enthusiast - Bud Minear!

Similarly, the annual Clambake on Saturday August was a gustatory success. Rain dictated a repeat of last year's change of venue from the McKenna backyard to the Club. Nevertheless, everything went smoothly and the presentation of the traditional fare, from chowder to the generously proportioned lobsters was well received by all present. Once again the McKenna clan deserves grateful recognition for their successful effort in preparing a first rate (albeit indoor) New England clambake!

This reduced issue of the Occasional Papers will be the last that will appear until a new project has been completed: the composition and publication of a commemorative volume in honor of the Clubhouse's 100 year anniversary. For details see below.

THE CLUBHOUSE'S 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

On March 1, 1893, the Old Colony Club voted to buy the property on the corner of Court and Brewster Streets from Mrs. Everett Sherman. Until that time the Club had existed in rented quarters, including three rooms on the east side of the old Hayward House (where Station One Restaurant is today) for \$75 a year from April 1875 to October, 1877; three rooms in the Davis Building (site of Woolworth's) from November, 1877, to April, 1888; and rooms in the New Bank Building (Main Street) from May 1, 1888, to the spring of 1893.

On February 6, 1893, a committee (of Arthur Lord, I. M. Jackson, Ellis Harlow, Anthony Atwood and A. P. Bent) was appointed to select a property for a permanent home for the Club. The committee recommendation on February 25th was to buy the B. A. Hathaway house on North Street for \$8,000, and it was duly voted that the Club should do so. There must have been some opposition afoot that the records do not reveal, because on March 1, another meeting was called: "At a Special Meeting of the Club called in accordance with the By-Laws. To consider the purchase of the land & building corner of Court and Brewster Street owned by Mrs. Everett Sherman..." This proposal was also approved and the Court St. property was duly acquired for \$4,500. The funding of this move was arranged as follows:

"After Consideration with care the subject of said purchase, the following 'Voted' were unanimously passed:

Voted: - The Treasurer is hereby authorized and instructed to purchase in the name of this Club the house and lot on the corner of Court and Brewster Street not including the house lot on Brewster Street of Mrs. Everett F. Sherman for the sum of Forty Five hundred dollars.

Voted: - The Treasurer is hereby authorized and instructed to negotiate and execute in the name and on behalf of this Club a mortgage in Common form for three thousand at a rate of interest not exceeding six per cent per annum on the real estate on the corner of Court and Brewster Streets in Plymouth this day authorized to be purchased.

Voted: - The Treasurer is hereby authorized to issue in the name and on behalf of this Club notes or Scrip to an amount not exceeding four thousand dollars bearing interest at the rate of five per cent per annum, payable Semi-Annually, principal payable in ten years from date, but the whole or any part of said Scrip shall be payable at any time at the option of the Executive Committee for the time being. In case part is paid at any time the particular notes or pieces of Scrip shall be determined by lot.

The Treasurer is also hereby authorized to dispose of said notes or Scrip to whomsoever may desire to purchase the same at not less than par, preference being given to members of this Club.

Voted: - That the Treasurer is hereby authorized and instructed to execute in the name and on behalf of this

Club a mortgage for the sum not exceeding four thousand dollars on the real estate on the corner of Court and Brewster Streets in Plymouth this day authorized to be purchased. Said mortgage to be subject to the mortgage heretofore authorized and to be made to James D. Thurber and Issac M. Jackson as Trustees as security for the holders of the scrip or notes this day authorized and to be in such form and with such Conditions as the executive Committee may approve.

Voted: - The executive Committee the President and the Treasurer with Mr. Leander S. Cole are hereby made a Committee with full power to alter, repair, furnish and install heating apparatus in the house, this day voted to be purchased by the Club, but no expense or liability shall be incurred greater than the sum of fifteen Hundred dollars.

Voted: - That the executive Committee be recommended to take such action as will be necessary to make the Active Membership of one hundred instead of Eighty as now stated in Article II of the Constitution.

Adjourned: Wm. S. Danforth Secy"

(followed by post card to membership announcing decision)

The Club then proceeded to renovate the building, with the following expenses:

Mortgage	\$3,000.00
Notes	\$3,300.00
(Notes due)	\$ 400.00
Purchase price	\$4,500.00
Recording deed, mortgage	\$ 3.35
Repairs	\$ 812.10
Cleaning	\$ 28.54
New Boiler	\$ 470.00
Gas piping	\$ 18.90
Electrical wiring	\$ 57.40
Coal	\$ 19.00
Furniture	\$ 500.21
Sundries (E.W. Harlow to Boston)	\$ 8.00

The Club also received \$40.50 for the old boiler and gas lines.

The *Old Colony Memorial* reported on the renovation of the new Clubhouse on April 20, 1893. A new light-tinted wallpaper was installed in the entry and the 130-year old staircase had been cleaned and repainted. A large moosehead was hung in the stairwell. The walls of the rooms were covered with a pressed figured paper. The house was wired for electrical lights and also piped for gas, as both forms of illumination were in use. The ceilings were tastefully tinted.

There were heavy tapestry carpets in every room except for the Billiard Room on the second floor. A small Domino Room was installed off the Billiard Room toward Court Street and two Card Playing rooms were

located beyond the Billiard Room towards the harbor, and a toilet as well.

Downstairs the Club Parlour was graced with a fireplace and a table for books and newspapers. There were many interesting pictures, of which game pieces predominated. A small writing room overlooking Court Street was fitted out with a cushioned window seat and a secretary desk for members' correspondence and Club business. To the rear of the Parlour was a Music Room with a deer's head over the fireplace and a table for magazines. The adjoining coat room was also provided with a "marble set bowl." The ell was furnished as an apartment for Mrs. and Mr. Alonzo H. Perry, the custodian and his wife. Mr. S. C. King was the builder and Mr. W. H. Williams decorated the rooms. The paper's account concluded that "The Old Colony Club has in these new quarters as elegantly appointed rooms as can be found outside the Hub, and the fitting is highly creditable to the taste and good judgement of those having it in charge."

PROPOSAL FOR OCC 1993 ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET.

The concept of this anniversary booklet is to produce a significant commemorative publication for members of the Club while also creating a viable commercial product which will have a broad appeal to anyone interested in Plymouth history. The general plan is to compose a descriptive account of Plymouth as it was in 1893, when the current Clubhouse was acquired by the Old Colony Club. The emphasis will be on Plymouth as a late 19th century town rather than in its usual presentation as a Pilgrim shrine.

The booklet will contain three main elements:

- 1) Text selections taken from a contemporary guidebook describing the town as a modern and prosperous Victorian community.
- 2) Pictures from our (and other) collections illustrating what the town looked like then, with the focus on those scenes and structures that have since disappeared.
- 3) A historical commentary on these things to explain the unfamiliar and provide greater depth to the brief references in the guide book text.

It is envisioned as a 6" x 9" booklet of about 60 pages, with perhaps 50 or so illustrations, and a color cover. The new Pilgrim Society Picture Guide to Historic Plymouth (1990) might serve as a general model.

Examples of a few rough pages (photos being taken from post cards and thus not really in proportion nor in quality what the actual illustrations will look like), a title page and a copy of the Plymouth Guide mentioned above have been left in the Reading Room for interested members to look at.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPOSED BOOKLET

"If we were suddenly transported to the Plymouth of a hundred years ago, it would not be difficult to figure out where we were. Many of the downtown streets and buildings (above their first stories) retain their familiar outlines from 1893. Then as now, the town was filled with visitors each summer, busily seaching out the memorials of the Pilgrims. A glance at a local directory would reveal many of the same names - Yankee, Irish, German, Italian, Portuguese - that are in the phone book today. Even the Gay Nineties styles, the horse-drawn carriages and the quaint things for sale in the shops are familiar to us from movies and flea markets. Plymouth, in short, would be recognizable a century ago in a way that it would not be two or three hundred years earlier.

Yet the initial sense of familiarity would soon dissipate. Much of the town, the waterfront and the Town Brook area in particular, has undergone considerable modification since then. There were once seven active wharves where Plymouth Rock and scattered pine trees are now, and a series of busy factories spanned the Brook at intervals. Far from being a sleepy country village, Plymouth was both an important port and a considerable manufacturing center. Railroad lines went to north to Boston and west to Middleborough, steamships brough people from Boston and Nantasket, and the Plymouth and Kingston Street Railway was about to be linked into a state-wide transportation system.

Even greater changes have occurred in the social life of the town over the past century. In 1893, there was little commuting to Boston, no malls and a strong local identity. It was not necessary to leave town to earn a living, shop or have a good time. Plymouth businesses provided for nearly all the wants of life. Numerous clubs, fraternal societies, musical groups, church congregations and neighborhood organizations provided Plymouthans with a diverse and active social mileau. The town enjoyed a sense of community far stronger than that found today.

Many communities in the United States maintain a proud memory of their nineteenth century past - as they have no other. In Plymouth, on the other hand, the 1890s are not just "only yesterday," but a yesterday few people know anything about. Even Plymouthans are sometimes mesmerized by the Pilgrims and overlook the fact that a lot happened here after 1620. In many ways, the close of the nineteenth century was one of the privileged periods in the Town of Plymouth's long history. The town's historic interest and natural beauty was complemented by the prosperity of its many active mills and factories. Its schools, social groups and public services were among the more up-to-date in the country. Poverty, crime and class distinctions did exist, yet these afflictions was less detrimental to life in Plymouth than they were in many American towns and cities of the time. While no Golden Age, the financial and social problems

of the period, such as the Panic of 1893 or labor unrest, were not severely felt here. Nineteenth century Plymouth was not just a Pilgrim shrine but also an interesting and comfortable place in which to live or to visit.

In this present work, a selection of the Club's pictures (and others from Pilgrim Hall) are combined with text from a contemporary guide to Plymouth, Old Plymouth: Its Localities and Objects of Interest (1895), and some clarifying notes to take the reader on a tour of that long departed community, at once familiar and unknown, that was Plymouth in 1893. We have omitted the sections of the guide which covered the story of the Pilgrims and their monuments, and focus on "Vanished Plymouth," the everyday buildings and scenes that are now gone forever.

THE OLD COLONY CLUB, 1993."

PAST PRESIDENT'S COLUMN WALTER V. SHOBBROOK 1988

Walter Shobbrook, son of the late Warrant Officer S. G. Shobbrook, RAF, and Mary Lillian Faith Shobbrook, ne Robinson, of Colombo, Ceylon, was born in the town of Rugby, Warwickshire, England, on May 28, 1919. His early life was spent in England and Egypt where his father was stationed for a number of years. After returning to England in 1932, he entered the Army Technical School at Beachley Pt (presently the Army Apprentices College) Nr Chepstow in 1932, graduating in 1937. After graduation he entered the Royal Army Service Corps, shortly afterwards transferring into the Royal Air Force where for the next year he attended the RAF's No. 3 School of Technical Training. Upon completion of courses there, he was sent in the spring of 1939 to the RAF's base at Habbaniya, Iraq, which was some sixty miles northwest of Bagdad on the Euphrates River. Normally this would have been a two year station, but owing to the outbreak of WWII, he spent three years and seven months in Iraq before returning to England in December, 1942. For almost a year he was in charge of a flight line at a Pilot's Advanced Flying Unit, before leaving for flight training himself. Here followed one of the odd quirks of war. With so many Aircrew under training at the same time, pilot training was delayed enormously, with great gaps between courses. He attended three different flying schools in England and was then sent to complete training in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (the present day Harare, Zimbabwe). Here he gained his Wings and was commissioned as a Pilot Officer. The war now being over, he remained in the service until 1948, then retired with the rank of Flying Officer. The next year was spent at the College of Commerce in Leeds, England, gaining a Certificate in Management before venturing out into the unfamiliar civilian world. A year of so of post-WWII England

convinced him to seek his fortune elsewhere and, having relatives in the U.S., came to Plymouth in the spring of 1951.

Within a week or so of his arrival, he hired on with the Plymouth Cordage Company and became a machinist working in No. 2 Mill machine shop. In the spring of 1954 he was offered a job supervising the installation of new machinery in a Cordage mill in Mexico. In August he left for the Yucatan where he stayed until 1957 when he took a similar position in the Dominican Republic. Two years of living under the dictatorship of Trujillo was enough, so he returned to Mexico, then came back to Plymouth. He bought a house in Marshfield and lived there for a while until he obtained a position with the Ludlow Corporation to go to Jamaica to help set up a new plant to make jute backing for carpets. Unfortunately, what with delays in construction and the inability of the local help to master the intricacies of manufacture and maintenance, the plant was not a success. After three years his contract was not renewed, and the plant closed the following year.

Then followed an interlude in which he decided to see what living in Texas would be like, so he took up residence in Dickinson, Texas, where some friends lived. He spent the next two years rigging sailboats and teaching people to sail and race them, which while being a very pleasant occupation, was not overly profitable. When an opportunity to work in a mill in El Salvador turned up, he took it. This turned out to be a

disaster, which prompted him to return to Plymouth to stay.

Now began a rebuilding process. He decided that a complete change of occupation was called for. While obtaining work locally, he attended Wentworth Institute in the evenings to study Air Conditioning and refrigeration. At the completion of the course he was hired by Boston Air Legasse (now Balco, Inc.) in their Service division. He spent the next eighteen years with Balco, Inc. Along the way, after taking the examination, he was accepted into the Pipefitters' Union (Local 537), Refrigeration Division, and also completed a three year course at Wentworth as a technical specialist in air conditioning and refrigeration. In 1984 at the age of 66 he retired from the active workforce, but is still busy as a consultant to a small firm manufacturing seafood flavors.

Walter Shobbrook was married in 1943 to Lena M. Beaumont while they were both serving in the Royal Air Force; she in the Women's' Auxiliary Air Force and he in the RAF. They met while serving on the same wartime station in England and, apart from wartime separation, they have been together wherever his work took them. Both husband and wife became U.S. citizens in the 1960s. They have three children. The eldest lives in New Zealand with her husband and children. Their younger daughter is a marketing executive in a division of Blue Cross, Blue Shield in Baltimore, and their son is a Captain in the U.S. Marine Corps stationed at Camp Edwards.



EVERY CLUB NEEDS A MOOSE HEAD ...AND CARDEPLAYERS?



OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, December, 1993

1

NEWS AND NOTES

RETURN OF THE OCCASIONAL PAPERS - AS THE O.C.C. QUARTERLY!

Now that our 100th Anniversary booklet, *Plymouth Illustrated 1893*, has been completed and is available in print, it is time that we continue with the series of the Old Colony Occasional Papers, which we have rechristened the Old Colony Quarterly, as that in fact is what the paper actually is. For newer members who are unacquainted with the Occasional Papers, we should explain that this series was begun to provide the Club with a vehicle for disseminating the wit and wisdom of the Club and its members, although contributions were rather scarce. It has therefore become a casual journal of topics associated with the Old Colony Club and Clubs in general. As it has been over a year since our previous issue, our noble Secretary has been doing yeoman work keeping members apprised of the doings around the Club in the absence of our quarterly summary. We will now once again begin our chronicle of the Club and hope that the members will find this paper as interesting as its predecessor.

For this issue, since I find that I lack the time to do all that I would like to accomplish, I beg the Club's indulgence in publishing an article on Plymouth history that I have, after a fashion, "inherited" rather than researched or written. The following article began life as a talk to the Pilgrim Society by F. Jane Baker of her reminiscences of life at Jabez Corner in the early years of the century.

It will eventually be part of a new Old Colony Club publication in combination with another contribution to the history of the Wellingsley neighborhood by Mrs. Marian Chaffin. Until then however, I believe that the membership might very well enjoy this snapshot of Plymouth history.

THE LITTLE TOWN: WELLINGSLEY, HOBS HOLE, & JABEZ CORNER

These are the ancient place names that refer to an area located about one mile south of Town Square in Plymouth. To us of the 20th century these places mentioned are on or near Route 3-A. The address of those whose houses face the highway is Sandwich Street for it is an old road laid out in the 17th century for travel between Plymouth and the town of Sandwich on Cape Cod.

The Little Town and Wellingsley are synonymous. The first seems to indicate that a small but fairly self-sufficient settlement was located in this area. Several references are made in the first volume of Plymouth Town Records as at a town meeting in August 1671: "The bounds of an addition of land formerly graunted unto Gyles Rickard Seni: lying adjoining unto his old field att Wellingsley allies the little Town..."¹

From the same volume in 1651: "At this meeting Nathaniell Morton Requested of the Towne a small moyetie of land lying betwixt the hieway by his house and the waterside or Creeke commonly called and known by the name of hobshole allis Wellingsley the said small moyetie being compassed with the aforesaid hole or creeke and on the other side with the brooke Running into said Creeke..."² Hobs Hole has always been an intriguing name and William T. Davis gives this explanation: "A large wet meadow with small pools of standing water scattered among comparatively dry tussock of grass difficult to cross except by jumping from one tussock to another and thus avoiding the muddy channels in-between. These tussocks are described in dictionaries as "hobs"...the spot which as early as 1623 was called Hobshole and which gave its name to the brook and the hamlet lying on its southern border."³ We are aware that there was a Hobs Hole at Runswick Bay on the east coast of England. This hole was inhabited by an

¹ Plymouth Town Records, vol. I, p.124.

² Ibid., p.33] .

³ Davis, W.T. Ancient Landmarks, , p.327.

ancient legendary elf named Hob, who was able to cure the whopping cough. Parents would take the afflicted child to this hole and call, "Hob Hole, Hob Hole my bairn's got kus cough - Tak-T'off, tak-t'off!"⁴

I can remember jumping from hob to hob across a foot or two of water. It was an exciting thing to do because, as children, we believed that if you missed the hob and landed in the water, you would immediately be swallowed up by quicksand.

The name "Wellingsley" may be taken directly from a locality in England or it could be descriptive as many wells and springs are found in this area. The last syllable "ley" or lea denotes a field or a district. This "wet meadow" can easily be viewed by the passing motorist as it lies adjacent to the street. At a really full tide the sea washes into the base of the bank below street level. The meadow itself is intersected by several small brooks and the mouth of Hobs Hole Brook is located there.

After passing the meadow on the east side of the street (heading south) there are two houses facing directly onto the street, then there is a lane toward the harbor. Pass another two houses and there is another such lane. Both these lanes are now private drives. The last mentioned one, in the preceding century led to Morton's Wharf. If you continue by the next three houses there is a third lane - Howes Lane, now a town way - down which one may proceed to the harbor.

The shore was a place of activity in preceding centuries. In the 19th century almost every family owned a dory or sailboat. At Morton's Wharf fishing vessels unloaded their catches of cod and in the fields near the harbor were "fish flakes" where the fish were dried after they had been cleaned and salted - also buildings in which to store the fish. There was another wharf north of Morton's known as "Tar Landing".

My aunt May Cooper remembered Morton's Wharf. Ships were moored on either side and sometimes a rope was tied to a pair of opposite masts. The ends of the rope hung down so that children could run down the

wharf, grab the rope and swing out a short distance over the water and back.

On Howes lane there still stands a little half-cape house where the Howes family lived. The one name that has been passed down through the years was that of Rebecca Howes. She was born in 1738, one of the children of Jeremiah Howes and Meriah Morton. The spring that bubbles up near the foot of Howes Lane for years was known as "Becky's Spring". It is still there today but clogged with algae, rockweed, assorted shells and is inhabited by tiny transparent shrimp and baby eels.

As a child I remember it as clean and clear. A wooden barrel was sunk in the earth and surrounded the spring leaving several inches above the ground so that the fresh water filled this area and one could easily use a dipper to get a drink or fill a pail or pitcher. It is probable that all of the water used by the Howes family came from the spring and if Becky was the one who fetched it she would have to do so at low tide for at high tide the spring is under sea water. This was only one of several small springs which bubble up at intervals along the shore. Seamen, preparing for a voyage, could conveniently fill their casks here.

My father's cousin, Elmer Bartlett, lived in Walpole but he was born and brought up near Jabez Corner (Hobs Hole). Whenever he came to visit us or other relatives in the neighborhood he always went to the shore for a drink at Becky's Spring. Sometimes he would bring back a jar of this water so that he could offer us each a drink of this local elixir.

We may walk up the short distance from the shore to the top of Howes Lane where Route 3A runs on before us on its southerly direction heading for the hills of Manomet and on to the Cape. As he passes the entrance of Howes Lane the motorist is probably unaware that he has left Sandwich Street and is driving on Warren Avenue which begins at this point. Looking across 3A we see that Sandwich Street has turned a sharp angle towards the west. It is this corner made by Sandwich Street which is called Jabez Corner.

The Churchills were the original owners of the land in this area. Davis, in his Titles Of

⁴ Briggs, Katherine *Personnel of Fairyland*.

Estates, has written "The corner lot... descended from Eleazer Churchill to his son Elkanah and grandson Elkanah and from the last Elkanah to his son Jabez (born 1756) whose shop standing on the lot gave the name by which the corner has been since known."⁵

In 1831 Mr. Churchill sold the lot to his son Jabez Jr. who divided it. In 1837 Jabez sold the north lot to Harvey Bartlett, whose home and property adjoined it. This deed is in our possession. It is signed by Jabez Churchill, Jr. and his wife Charlotte. The price was \$20.00. Jabez did not sell the south lot until 1871 when it was bought by the Town of Plymouth on which to build a new primary school.

The neighborhood of Wellingsley began at Hobs Hole Brook. In times past various small industries have been located there. In the 19th century M.H. Ryder had a straw hat factory on the east side of Sandwich Street, and Morton and Blackmer operated a Hammerworks and Steel Manufactory on the west side. There had once been a foundry further down the brook, and in the fields adjacent to the harbor just beyond the meadow was the shipyard of Edwin and Ichabod Morton. They built and maintained vessels for Grand Banks fishing and also ships for coastal and foreign trade. These brothers later ran a general store in an old house near the head of Mortons Lane. "They were the earliest traders to abandon the sale of intoxicating liquors and among the first to join the movement against the institution of slavery."⁶ Ichabod was much interested in the cause of education and worked for increasing the appropriations for the support of public schools. He, together with Horace Mann, succeeded in establishing the Normal School at Bridgewater.

There is a house one either side of the street after one crosses the brook. There was once a blacksmith's shop near the easterly one (now owned by Harold Boyer). Then the land drops nearly to sea level. There could be no houses built on this salt marsh nor were there any on the steep high bank on the westerly side of the street for the first 300 years, with one exception. Once past the Hobs Hole Marsh there are houses on either side of the

street. They stand quite close together and in some cases two or three families share the same driveway.

Beyond the entrance to Howes Lane the road rises and for many years this was a private way. Once opened to the public it was called Franklin Street, and later changed to Warren Avenue.

To follow Sandwich Street as it turns at Jabez Corner, one finds of all the old houses the Cape style house predominates, although the oldest house of all, built by the Churchills, is today two stories. The Creedens who own it today and have worked carefully on its restoration found that the roof has been raised three times during its three centuries. This house, the "Cape" next of it and the Cole's house further south on the west side of the street all face south. This is often true of early dwellings, later houses being built to face the street.

THE GENERAL STORE: 19th Century.

Harvey Bartlett married Nancy Holmes in 1828. They began their married life in the old 17th century house built by Giles Rickard on the west side of Sandwich Street. My aunt Mary Cooper, their granddaughter, told me a little about the house although she had never seen it. It was a typical for this area, one and one half story with a gambrel roof and a great central chimney. People traveled on foot in those days heading towards Boston or the Cape, settlers, strangers and Indians. Harvey never refused anyone shelter for the night. In cold weather, they would sleep in front of the wide kitchen hearth.

There were children born to the Bartletts. The little house was crowded and one summer the family lived in the barn, tore down the old house and built a more spacious home. In 1837, Harvey bought the lot south of his from Jabez Churchill, Jr., and built a general store. It is possible he used Churchill's old shop for a time before he replaced it with his new one.

We have Harvey Bartlett's ledger for 1844 - 45 with a list of 68 customers on the front page. Here are names of some of the families of the neighborhood taken from a ledger book of Harvey Bartlett's General Store for 1844 - 45: Bartlett, Holmes, Churchill, Whiting, Wadsworth, Sears, Burgess, Paty,

⁵ Davis, W.T. *Ancient Landmarks*, p.331.

⁶ Davis, W.T. *Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian*, p. 307

Morton, Cornish, Cole, Lewis, Cobb, Robinson, Perkins, Leach, Blackmer, Allen, Manter, Harlow and Hoxie. The ledger shows us a different culture than our modern supermarkets. Simple raw materials bought in bulk made up the local diet and standard of living. Prices of April, 1845: eggs 6¢ a dozen, butter 20¢ a pound, coffee 19¢ a pound, tea 20¢ a pound, a quart of beans, 7¢, saleratus 8¢, sugar 10¢ a pound, molasses 33¢ a gallon, and five pounds of pork for 45¢. Quantities unlisted were herrings @6¢, or herrings 24¢, clams 10¢, coots 25¢. One could buy 2 hats for 32¢ and two apples for a penny.

Dry goods included yarn, cambric, drilling, sheeting, calico (4 yards for 15¢), cashmere and flannel. Suspenders were 10¢, a pair of stockings 50¢. One order rather more expensive listed: Mo. Shawl \$5.00, spoons \$5.50 and a wash stand \$1.00. The store also acted as a bank where a customer could draw out money against his account if he needed cash. Son Harvey made and mended shoes. I think his shop was above the store. His accounts were listed in the ledger. Shoes cost 90¢ to \$1.25, and for mending boots, the charge was 25¢ to 60¢.

In the 1960's when visiting "Aunt" Amy Carnes Smith at Newfield House, I was told some of her memories of the Bartletts. Amy and her parents, Capt. William and Lucy Carnes lived next door to Harvey and Nancy, at 229 and 231 Sandwich St. As a small child Amy would "tag along" after Harvey when he went to the pasture for his cows, or when he was mending his fences. One day Amy fell and cut a gash in her head and Lucy, alone in the house with the child, cried out to Harvey to stop the bleeding. "He went up in the barn," said Aunt Amy, "and came back with some dirty, dusty old cobwebs and laid them over the cut and, do you know, it healed perfectly!"

Harvey's grandchildren came from Boston to spend their summer vacations. They were Jennie, Mary, Guy, and Gertie Cooper. Said Gertie, the youngest, to Amy "Why do you always follow him around? He's MY grandfather!"

Amy and Harvey entered the Bartlett kitchen one day where his wife Nancy was busy with household tasks. Harvey went into the next room, and Nancy could hear him opening a

drawer in the bureau. "Harvey, what are you after?" "I just thought I'd like to give Amy a nickel." Such generosity did not meet with Nancy's approval. She was manager of the household. One can sense it in her profile if you look closely at the silhouettes of this couple made at about the time of they were married.

She was an expert needlewoman as exemplified by her beautiful sampler made in 1823 when she was fifteen. Her instructor was probably Maria de Verdier Turner, an accomplished European woman who became the wife of Captain Lothrop Turner of Plymouth. (See Mary M. Davidson's book of *Plymouth Colony Samplers*) There is a scene of Mount Vernon worked below the alphabet and a handsome border of roses and other flowers. The verse is from Alexander Pope: "Tis education forms the common mind. Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd."

Nancy's "twig" was bent to tell the truth. When her granddaughter Mary invited a little girl in to play, Nancy greeted her with "Who be ye?" then she added "Dreadful homely child, an't ye?!" It was an embarrassment which Mary never forgot.

Mary said that she always had to wear old clothes through the summer as grandmother Nancy put away the best ones in "the front clothes press". This was a small room over the front stairs that served as a general closet for the household. Mary loved clothes but there was little occasion to wear them other than at a church sociable. One summer evening Mary and another girl in the neighborhood planned to attend one of these. The young girl came running into the yard calling excitedly, "Mary, they're going to serve a collation." At this point she stumbled and fell. She picked herself up quickly and ran almost breathless up to Mary and said, "They're going to serve a col- col- a collision!"

The daughter of Harvey and Nancy who inherited their house was Almira, who married George Cooper of Plymouth. Their early married life was spent in Boston (South Boston) where George worked as a mason for his brother Isaac, who was a contractor. Among certain well known buildings they erected were Franklin Square House, The Old Natural History Museum (Bonwit Teller's, 1980) on Berkeley St. and the New Old South Church in Copley Square. George

learned to speak Gaelic from his Irish co-workers and both he and his son Guy (my father) never failed to celebrate St. Patrick's Day by singing songs and wearing "of the green." Perhaps George absorbed a bit of Irish fantasy for when he was working at the very top of the aforementioned church tower, he was visited by a butterfly that hovered near him for so long a time that he believed it to be his mother's spirit come to protect him in that precarious place.

Harvey Bartlett, Sr. died in 1885. His second son, Ansel, took over the general Store at Jabez Corner. Ansel had served as a mariner during the Civil War. He never married. Some of his books were in the Bartlett family house when my father inherited it in the 1920s, two of them being a large leather bound volume, the *Complete Works of William Shakespeare* illustrated with steel engravings and *Ancient Landmarks of Plymouth* by Wm. T. Davis.

In his ledger of 1898-99 I find very little change in the stock or prices of the store. The list of customers had changed. There were twice as many women as listed by Harvey. Her had two, Mary Bartlett and Mary Perkins. Ansel had four; Ester Bartlett (his sister-in-law), Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Sarah Manter and Miss Maggie Morton.

Ansel sold imported fruit; oranges, lemons and bananas. One lobster, 25¢; overalls, 50¢; stockings 60¢, up 10¢ from Harvey's day.

When someone in the neighborhood was stricken by unusual illness or other misfortune, Ansel would post a paper in his store with the name of the unfortunate person and the circumstances. Beneath this he would write his own name and the amount of money he was giving to the cause. Customers who came to the store were expected to do likewise. Ansel collected the funds and saw that they were used for the proper purpose. This was probably an ancient custom passed down through the generations.

This was the era (1880s - 1890s) of the Jabez Corner Chowder Club. They met in rooms over the store for dinners and sociability and to play cards, checkers and cribbage.

Some members of this Club were photographed in 1899 at the Burgess Place at

Boot Pond (now the house of Carroll Daley). Among them were Walter Sears, Albert Harlow, Dr. Hill, Dr. Churchill, I. Morton, F. Churchill, H. Howland, H. Morrissey, W. Edes and Ansel Bartlett. "Anse" is holding up the cane or broomstick as though to lead a parade. This picture is ours with the compliments of Nathaniel Morton so it is stated on the back. It was taken with a wide angled lens.

At Jabez Corner, there was always a Clam Bake to which everyone in the neighborhood was invited. It was held in a field at the foot of Howes Lane which overlooked the harbor. Tables were set up under the "Balm of Gilead" trees. Besides the Clams, lobsters and vegetables of the Bake, there were homemade pies, cakes and cookies and lemonade. At high tide, there was a sailboat race and there were probably games.

Croquet was very popular at this time. One warm summer afternoon Anse and his friends were playing this game on a strip of lawn just outside the store. A smart looking stranger drove up, hitched his horse to the post and entered the store. No one was there. The stranger came out intensely irritated and expressed himself in no uncertain manner but all eyes were centered on the game. As his voice and indignation rose the stranger was approached by "Sam B" Holmes purse in hand, saying quietly, "If any of these gentlemen owes you money, I will be glad to cash it."

Some who read this may be familiar with the picture of "Anse" Bartlett's store which appears in a booklet issued by the Plymouth Bank and the Plymouth National Bank on their 125th year. Ranged along the wide front step of the store are Captain Ben Sears, Captain Wellington Lamberton, Captain Lionel Churchill, (in the doorway) Guy Cooper (Ansel's nephew and later owner of the store), Lemuel Howland, Ansel Bartlett and Sam B. Holmes.

Lionel (pronounced li o' nel) had bought some lamb one morning for his wife to make a stew. "How was the stew?" someone asked him that afternoon. "We-ll," he spoke as always with a drawl, "We-all - I'd as soon step outside and let the northwest wind blow through me." Lionel owned a ship, the "Jennie Cushman." His daughter Mary, when she was a very old lady, gave the

framed picture of the ship to my father. It is a drawing of the "Jennie Cushman Entering the straits of Gibraltar."

After Lionel retired from the sea he took various other short jobs. One day he was laying tarpaper over a new roof. The chimney of the house had not yet been built but a space had been cut for it in the roof. Lionel, busy with the hammering, didn't notice when his helper, Billy Sherman, suddenly disappeared. Onlookers saw and yelled "Lionel! Lionel! Billy's fallen through the chimney hole!" Lionel continued to hammer until the nail was properly positioned, then he turned toward his informers on the ground below, and drawled, "He always does that."

Billy's last mishap was fatal. He was in a dory with friends. It was getting dark and the winds and waves were rising. The friends sang cheerfully for they had all imbibed a fair amount of what my father called "Oh be joyful." Billy believed he had better get home. He mentioned something about walking on the water, recalling hearing that this had been done. With this prospect Billy left the boat.



We would be very pleased to receive similar memories of other Plymouth neighborhoods if any member can supply us with the copy.

"ALL HAIL THE DAY" BY ALEXANDER SCAMMELL

Several members, having noticed the reference in the new Club booklet to the 1770 song specifically composed for the Old Colony Club by member Alexander Scammell, have expressed an interest in seeing the words to "All Hail the Day." We have therefore included Scammell's verses here. It was sung to the tune of the *British Hero*, about which we know nothing at this time.

All hail the day that ushers in,
The period of revolving time,
In which our sires of glorious fame,
Bravely through toils and danger came,

Novanglia's wilds to civilize,
And wild disorder harmonize,
To plant Britannia's Arts and Arms,
Plenty, peace, freedom, pleasing charms,

Derived from British rights and laws,
That justly merit our applause,

Darlings of Heaven, heroes brave,
You still shall live though in the grave.

Live, live, within each grateful breast,
With reverence for your names possessed,
Your praises on our Tongues shall dwell,
And sires to sons your actions tell.

The distant poles their praise resound,
Let virtue be with glory crowned,
Ye dreary wilds, each rock and cave,
Echo the virtues of the brave.

They nobly braved their indigence,
Death, famine, sword and pestilence,
Each toil, each danger they endured,
Til for their sons they had procured,

A fertile soil, profusely blest
with Nature's stores, and now possessed
By sons who gratefully revere,
Our Fathers' names and memories dear,

Plymouth the great Mausoleum,
Famous for our Forefathers Tomb,
Join, join the chorus one and all,
Resound their deeds, in Colony Hall.

The way that Plymouth is going now, the downtown area does resemble a "great mausoleum." Perhaps Scammell was more prescient than we might think.

"CLUB ECCENTRICS"

One of the great joys of a good club is the variety of personality that its members exhibit, and the subsequent grist for anecdotes and club legends which they provide. In this selection, we see some of the vagaries that the great tradition of the London Club produced in its Golden Age at the end of the 19th century. Unlike the Old Colony Club, the traditional London Club was a more varied and also more impersonal institution, which often resulted in the rather unusual circumstances noted by Ralph Nevill:

"In many clubs there is a mysterious member or two, about whom nothing seems to be known. No one can say who he is, what locality gave him birth, or what his available means of subsistence may be. He is the child of mystery, nor does he ever attempt to raise the veil, except when he vaguely alludes to "his people in the North"; but whether he

means the North of England or the North of London no one whom he honours with his acquaintance is ever able to discover. Everything about such a man is a mystery, including the circumstances which led to his election.

Whilst eccentricity, for the most part, takes the innocuous form of avoidance of society, there have been people who have suffered from a disquieting love of sociability. Such a one used to make a practice of speaking to all of his fellow-members, whether he knew them or not. One day, however, finding himself seated opposite an old gentleman who was reading a newspaper, this individual entirely failed to obtain any answer to an incessant flow of talk, so, becoming angry, he at last kicked up with his foot and sent the paper flying into its astonished reader's face, the result being that the aggressor very shortly afterwards retired from the club.

It is said that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and it is surprising how disagreeable one cantankerous man who uses his club can make it to those around him. He is always coming upon the scene when not wanted. If you go up to the library, you find him snoring on the sofa, with the very book you have come in search of in his useless grasp. If you dine accidentally at the club, your table is sure to be placed next to his. Are you having a quiet chat with a friend, most assuredly will this wretched being drop in and spoil the conversation. He is always quarreling with people, and asking you to support his complaints. Such a man has no friends and his list of acquaintances is limited.

In past days old members were sometimes very severe in their comments upon newly-elected young men of whose ways they did not approve. One of the latter, just elected to a club, having somehow incurred the wrath of a certain irascible character, to his amazement heard him saying: 'What an insupportable cub that fellow is! What on earth were the committee doing to elect him! Why, I'd give him a pony [£ 50] not to belong now.' This perturbed the new member, who left the club-house thinking what course he ought to take, and, as luck would have it, met on the staircase a member who bore the well-deserved reputation of being a thorough man of the world. Stopping the latter, he told him of the insulting remark, and inquired what he ought to do. 'Do?' was the reply;

'why nothing at present. After you've used the club for another month, you'll probably be offered a hundred!'

In more or less every club there is one or two solemn-looking members who are seldom known to speak to anyone, but spend their time in what is, or looks like, deep study. Votaries of almost perpetual silence, they are easily made to frown at the sound of conversation. The favorite haunt of such as these is generally the library, which they regard as their own domain, and where on no account must they be disturbed.

One of this class, who in the more expansive days of his youth, twenty years before, had had a great friend who, after leaving the University, went out to live in the East, was one day, according to his usual wont, reading in the library of his club, when, to his horror, he heard the door open briskly. A robust figure, whose countenance seemed not entirely unfamiliar, strode up to him, and seizing his hand, shook it. 'Well, old fellow,' said the intruder, 'it's many a long day since we met. Now let's hear what you have been doing all these years.' Without saying a word, the ruffled student raised a warning finger, and pointed to the placard of 'silence' on the mantelpiece.

'I was glad to see the man again,' said he afterwards; 'but he had no business to break one of our rules.'

Another kind of club-man is the irascible pedant, whose idiosyncrasies make conversation almost impossible. He will address you; he will lecture; he will instruct you; but he will not chat with you — conversation with him is a monologue. He is to preach, you are to listen. If you interrupt him, he will look as if sincerely pained by your audacity; if you venture an opinion, he will promptly contradict it; and even if you ask him a question on a subject to of which he knows nothing, he will reply at enormous length.

It was a man of this kind who once described Niagara as a horrid place where you couldn't hear the sound of your own voice."

(Nevill, Ralph. *London Clubs*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1911, pp. 197-200)

NEXT ISSUE (MARCH, 1993):

Whose House Was This ?, Old Colony Club Picture Identification, and more.



ORDER YOUR COPIES NOW! GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT!

84 pages — 70 illustrations, including 60 old and rare photographs of
Plymouth a century ago.

The text includes a tour of Plymouth in 1893 from a guide book of the time, with annotations by James W. Baker, and a history of the Old Colony Club from 1769 to 1993.

Don't fail to avail yourself of our new Old Colony Club publication, *Plymouth Illustrated* 1993! Only \$7.50 for Club Members — Now selling for \$10.00 at stores around Plymouth. Call Jim Baker to place your orders (Plimoth Plantation - (508) 746-1622 ext. 227 weekdays).

Plymouth Illustrated:1893

A TOUR OF PLYMOUTH AS IT WAS LONG AGO

Town Square, Plymouth, Mass.





OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, March, 1994. Ser. 1, No. 11

1

NEWS AND NOTES

Come one and all — come and see the Social Room in its handsome new incarnation. Gone are the pale colors, Formica and linoleum of yesterday. In their place we find a decor that reflects the dignity and masculinity of a traditional Club. Through the extensive efforts of Grey Perry, and the other members of the Long Range Planning Committee (Bud Minear, Alan Zanotti, Lionel Fortini and Fred Dalton), the Old Colony Club has completely renovated the old Social Room.

The wainscot and woodwork are now a dark brown reminiscent of the dark paneling in an old pub or chop house, with walls of a lighter brown and a "Warm Gray" carpet. The previous bar has been replaced with a more genteel sideboard upon which the member's bottles are now arranged more after the manner of a private gentleman's cabinet than a suburban rec room. The lavatory door has been walled over and the entrance returned to the older door leading from the back stairs hall. The kitchen area, which has been transformed into what the British term a "snuggery" or small service area complete with paneled counter, sink and dishwasher, may now be entered through an arch that effectively makes it part of the larger public space. The nautical theme of the room has been retained (Grey repaired the bowsprit of the *Cutty Sark* model as part of his task) and everyone agrees that the Club may be proud of its central meeting space.

EXPENSES OF OTHER DAYS

At the end of every month we hear from the Treasurer the doleful toll of our fleeting money as the expenses mount day by day. Of course it was always thus, as much so now as in the past, but the ravages of inflation and costly technological advances sometimes makes the costs of other days seem pretty insignificant! As a memory of the Club's long vanished history I thought it might be entertaining to see what the month of March, 1917, brought in way of expenses for the Old Colony Club.

A.S. Burbank (Stationer)

Red Ink	.10
1500 letterheads	7.00
printing same	6.75
1 ledger	1.00
1 journal	.50
	15.35
Old Colony Laundry	
For February	2.20
Plymouth Gas Light Co.	
1300 cu.ft. @ 1.65	2.02
George L. Gray (OCC Steward)	
House cleaning	16.50
Salary (2 weeks)	30.00
Little Pond Ice Co.	
750 pounds ice	2.25
W.N. Snow (Furniture)	
4 leather seats	5.00
D. H. Craig (Coal)	
10,080 lb Lehigh Egg	48.38
S.S. Pierce	
500 Eg. Deities #10	9.00
(cigarettes)	
100 Overland Puritanos	6.50
100 " Express	7.00
(cigars)	
1 doz. Dill's Cut Plug	.96
Cummings & Cummings (Grocers)	
200 Nacondas	12.40
(cigars)	
Plymouth Electric Light Co.	9.58
S.S. Pierce	
500 Eg. Deities #10	9.00
200 Natural 10s	2.28
200 Murad	2.28
200 Mogul	2.28
(cigarettes)	
50 Carolina Perfectos	9.70
50 Larranagas Symbols	6.60
50 " Belvederes	6.25
200 Overland Express	7.00
(cigars)	
George L. Gray (OCC Steward)	
House cleaning	18.00
(for Jas. S. Lyle)	
Salary (2 weeks)	30.00
Mary L. Lanman (mag. subs.)	
World's Work	2.50
Scientific American	3.50

Cosmopolitan	1.50
Literary Digest	3.00
Harper's	<u>3.50</u>
	14.00
W.N. Snow	
Upholster leather sofa	30.00
Plymouth Gas Light Co.	
800 cu. ft.	1.24
Memorial Press	
Menu Cards	4.95
117 Postcards Smoker	2.22
New England Telephone	4.00
Plymouth Hardware	
1 dust brush	.45
1 Janitor's duster	1.75
Liquid Veneer	.50
1 galv. pail	<u>.45</u>
	\$414.14

We have a rather different set of expenses today (the Club was officially "dry" in 1917 and members paid directly for their meals which were prepared by Mr. Gray) but I guess Cliff wouldn't mind having \$414.14 for a month's bills today.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Elsewhere in this issue of the OCC Quarterly, completion of the Social Room renovation by the Long Range Planning Committee is reported. The project was successful because many members made contributions to fund it, there being no large endowment fund at the Old Colony Club which might create enough income to do this. We do have a small endowment fund, but basically to begin a project requiring over several thousand dollars, we must petition the membership and hope for the best.

As we demolished and rebuilt the Social Room, the age and general condition of our Clubhouse was clearly evident, and as with any house approaching 200 years in age, there are many, many projects to be done, some structural, some cosmetic. The Long Range Planning Committee will continue to evaluate what needs to be done, and assign priorities to the various projects, and, with the advice and counsel of the Executive Committee, try to accomplish as much as possible.

The limiting factor is the lack of money. A club of our's age should have had a permanent endowment fund long before this. Such a fund would give us a steady source of income that would assist in funding the purposes of the Club: "organized for the establishment and maintenance of a reading

room and a place for social meetings, and for social pleasure, recreation and other nonprofitable purposes for the benefit of its members."

And so we come to another kind of Long Range Planning. Last year, the Old Colony Club celebrated 100 years in its present clubhouse. The Bible says that "a faithful friend is the medicine of life." The Old Colony Club has been a faithful friend to hundreds of Plymouth men for over one hundred years. How did this come to be? The answer is simple, yet powerful. Anonymous predecessors, without fanfare or recognition, planted seeds to perpetuate our Club for friends not yet born.

And now our friend needs our help.

A Greek philosopher said, "It is not so much our friends' help that helps us, but rather the confident knowledge that our friends will help us when we need it."

As we enter our second century at 25 Court Street, we're facing a fork in the road, a turning point for our Club.

To thrive, we need to replenish our economic resources. Our mission is simple: To give the same opportunities and the same quality of experience to those to come. Together, we must commit to perpetuate the dream. The seeds we plant today will bear fruit for another 100 years.

The Executive Committee has begun work on a simple program for all Members to make provision for the Old Colony Club in their long range estate planning. While there are many methods, such as including the Club in you estate plans, donating real estate, stock, etc., the simplest way is to buy term life insurance, say for \$5000, and name the Old Colony Club as beneficiary upon your death. Please be on the lookout for more details on this program.

We absolutely must build up our Permanent Endowment Fund for the many projects ahead of us, and to ensure the continuity of the Old Colony Club for the next 100 years. It is up to us, all of us, each one of us.

Grey Perry
Chairman,
Long Range Planning Committee

NEEDED FOR THE SOCIAL ROOM:

The House Committee is looking for donations to equip the Social Room. They are requesting a nice, large ice bucket to replace the enormous stainless steel milk pail we have been using. Also, we need a nice water pitcher to replace the grungy yellow plastic pitcher with the discolored base. Anyone who might want to donate these, or provide money to purchase same, please contact Jack Spencer.

The House Committee is also proposing to acquire a few small tables to use in the Social Room. Several members indicated a certain fatigue in holding their glasses continuously and requested a table for that purpose. We are looking for donations so that three or four small tables, all alike, can be purchased. Perhaps that can be one of the objectives of the Ladies Night Pot Luck dinner/fund-raiser scheduled in late March. Watch for details on the bulletin board.

THE OLD COLONY CLUB PICTURE COLLECTION

The most important asset of the Old Colony Club after the conviviality and enthusiasm of its membership is the extensive collection of old pictures of Plymouth which adorn the walls. As many people have expressed an interest in the collection, it is fitting that we take them a few at a time and describe their significance by publishing the informative descriptions compiled by Club Historian Fred Jenks. We will therefore try to include several of the pictures' descriptions in each future issue of the Quarterly (which will also save your editor a lot of effort trying to patch together sufficient material to fill these pages each month). What we then would encourage is for all members to come to the Club and see the actual pictures for themselves.

The pictures were originally classified by Mr. Jenks in a catalogue that currently resides in the Library bookcase. Each of the earlier pictures was assigned a number which we presume reflected the order of their arrangement on the Club walls. Various reorganizations and additions since that time have thoroughly confused the old system that the numbers now bear no correspondence to their arrangement, and many pictures have no number or catalogue entry at all.

The first (of 171) catalogued pictures, which hangs above the red couch in the Parlor, is a copy of a portrait of Alexander Scammell, which is

reproduced in *Plymouth Illustrated 1893* (p. 58). In Mr. Jenks catalogue, the entry reads:

Alexander Scammell, a native of Mendon, Mass., a graduate of Harvard, 1769, and came to Plymouth the same to teach a public school. The school house stood on the west side of School Street just north of the main entrance to Burial Hill (see Picture #73) a building well remembered by many men today (1933) as the Engine House where the first steam fire engine was kept and later changed to make room for #2, the Jeremiah Ferris.

Alexander Scammell was a member of the Old Colony Club of Plymouth, and was elected to membership at the business meeting of the Club on the evening of the Club's first celebration of Forefather's Day, December 22, 1769. At the celebration of 1770 a song written by Mr. Scammell [see OCC Quarterly, 12/93, # 10] was sung to the tune of the *British Navy*. The eighth and last verse is here given:

Plymouth the great mausoleum
Famous for our forefathers' tomb
Join, join the chorus one and all
Resound their deeds in Colony Hall.

Alexander Scammell removed to Portsmouth, N.H., in 1778 and carried on business as a surveyor. He was commissioned as Colonel of the Third New Hampshire regiment and in September 1775 was made brigade Major by the Continental Congress. On the 25th of September 1778 he was made Adjutant General of the Continental Army. At the Siege of Yorktown, 1781, on September 29, the British had retired from their outer line of works which they had occupied, leaving this line to be occupied by the Americans.

Before the occupation Colonel Scammell (he had asked and obtained an independent command) was officer of the day. While reconnoitering he was surprised and attacked by a party of the enemy's cavalry, was mortally wounded [sic], taken prisoner and died the following month while in a hospital in Williamsburg, Va.

A memorial to Colonel Scammell stands at the base of Burial Hill, west from the entrance and on the site of the school-house where he taught in 1769.

Picture #2, which is now on the left side of the window in the Library, is actually a facsimile of the signatures on the original records of the Old Colony Club and probably reproduced from the illustration in the published records of the Club. To the founder's list, Mr. Jenks adds:

"...Soon after there were added to the organization:

George Watson	Nathaniel Lothrop
James Warren	John Russell
James Hovey	Edward Clark
Thomas Mayhew	Alexander Scammell
William Watson	Peleg Wadsworth
Gideon White	Thos Southworth
Elkanah Watson	Thomas Davis

These men were all connected with the story of Plymouth Town during their time. They were of mixed political beliefs, and naturally those who held military and civil positions in the Massachusetts Colony under the Crown were loyal to the Crown, and remained loyal, and so sought or were compelled to find new homes. This fact will account for the many people of Mayflower descent in the British provinces."

Old Colony Club
January 1769

Grace Lathrop
William Winston
Thomas Lathrop
Elhanah Gushman
John Thomas
Edward Winston
John Watson
Cornelia White July 12th
Thomas Mayhew
Baker
Abel Scammett
Samuel Adams

Picture #3 (until recently hanging in the Social Room) is of the Bark *Brontes*, Ichabod D. Carver, Master, as it was entering the Texel on December 15, 1837. The bark *Brontes* is mentioned by W.T. Davis as having been lost on a voyage from Aux Cayes to Boston, after leaving Plymouth on Dec.31, 1862 under Capt. John E. Morton. Mr. Jenks added the following to this rather brief identification:

Registered Jan. 20, 1836. Built at Plymouth 1836 291 70/95 tons. Length 107' breadth 24'6" depth 12'3"

Master Ichabod D. Carver. Owners: William Nelson, James Collins, Jr., Harvey Weston, Charles Bramhall, James E. Leonard, John Bartlett, 3rd and William J. Bartlett. James Collins, Jr., Master Carpenter. Jacob Jackson, Surveyor.

Picture #4 (hanging behind the television set) is a reproduction of half of a stereopticon slide illustrating the 1865 Fourth of July parade as it came down Summer St. to the junction of Market St. W.T. Davis notes the event as follows:

"In 1865, Independence day was celebrated by the citizens, the features of the celebrations being morning salutes, the ringing of bells, and a march of the ancient and horribles, followed by a procession, and an oration by Rev. George H. Hepworth of Boston..." (*Ancient Landmarks*, p. 385)

Picture Unavailable
 at last Minute - see next
 Issue - JWB

Mr. Jenks also supplies:

"Summer Street Antique & Horrible Procession July 4"

SELECTMEN ON THE TRAIL!

Years ago one of the more practical festivals of the Christian Year was Rogation. A moveable holiday that occurred the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Ascension Thursday, Rogation was when each town organized a procession to trace the parish or borough boundaries. Civic and religious leaders led a perambulation which stopped at each boundary marker where a prayer was given (in part to prevent evil spirits from spreading diseases and spoiling the harvest) before returning to the church for cakebread and ale. Another feature was the practice of "beating the bounds" which was done both figuratively by pacing them off and literally with peeled willow wands to both the boundary markers themselves and to little boys brought along for the purpose in order to impress upon their memories the exact location of the true parish boundaries so that when they grew up they could attest to the boundaries even if the markers went astray, and carry on the tradition. They were also often given a small coin for their troubles.

I bring up the old ceremonies of Rogation because the custom, if not the holiday, for "beating the

bounds" came to the New World, and was not all that long ago still expected of the Selectmen of Massachusetts towns. Although such a march is still legally required of the Selectmen, in Plymouth at least the old custom has apparently been more or less passed over to the Town Engineer's office. Their predecessors weren't so soft. The following article from the OCM (Oct. 9, 1941) described the Plymouth perambulation of that year:

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Perambulating Of Town Lines Important Every 5Yr. Job of Selectmen

**Officials of Plymouth, Carver And
Kingston Hike Miles Through Brush To
Establish Lines.**

Statute

Mass. General Laws, Chapter 42, Section 1: directs that "the Selectmen shall perambulate, run and mark the boundary lines of towns every five years or appoint substitutes and erect monuments at angles on boundary lines, also where a highway crosses lines.

Plymouth being bounded by Duxbury, Kingston, Bourne, Wareham and Carver and the several divisions perambulated in separate years, the 1941 assignment involved the bounds between Plymouth, Kingston and Carver.

The date is mutually agreed upon by the Selectmen of the towns concerned and on Wednesday, October 1st, Selectmen James A. White, James T. Frazier and Town Engineer Arthur Blackmer substituting for Selectman William H. Barrett, left the Plymouth Town House at 7:45 a.m. supplied with a can of black paint, a brush, a complete description of the bounds and a map, and went to the Plymouth-Kingston line, where at the north end of the Plymouth Cordage property they met and exchanged greetings with Selectman John J. Moore and Town Accountant Roland Bailey, substituting for Selectman William Post.

The two groups then proceeded to trace over the letter "K" for Kingston and the letter "P" for Plymouth with the year 1941 on the first bound, which was situated at the shore line and was readily located.

The second bound visited was located on the main highway at the Plymouth-Kingston line, where the same procedure of marking was made.

OTHERS DIFFICULT

The remaining twelve boundary markers were more difficult to locate because of the wild growth of scrub brush and undergrowth which had changed the appearance of the terrain completely since the last perambulation five years previous.

The boundary markers are usually in the form of a square post hewn from field stone and about four feet high, above ground, with the exception of one bound known as "Nick's Rock," which is approximately the size of a small house and although located less than one hundred feet from the woods road, the rock was the most difficult to locate because of its moss covered surface blending in with the scrub woods that surround it.

On more than one occasion it was necessary to leave the autos at the nearest clearing and travel through the woods for a mile or more through brush and briars so often found in untravelled parts of the woods.

It was often necessary to determine the distance from certain bounds by the aid of the auto cyclometer in order to locate the succeeding bound, which was frequently concealed by bushes.

Selectmen Arthur W. Peterson and Frank E. Barrows joined the group in the village of Darby and the bound dividing Carver, Kingston and Plymouth was located and marked.

Following this marking, the Kingston Selectmen signed the necessary documents attesting that the bounds were in their proper locations and properly marked, then took their departure.

CARVER-PLYMOUTH

The remainder of the perambulation concerned the towns of Carver and Plymouth in the direction of Wareham, through the Myles Standish Reservation. One boundary marker in the Reservation was discovered to be under water at a distance too great to reach from shore without a boat and it was decided that an iron pipe should be driven in at that point when that body of water is frozen sufficiently to permit it.

The bound dividing Carver and Plymouth on the southwest was reached by walking about a half-mile through a swamp overgrown with brush.

The inscribing on this bound being duly executed, a return was made to the autos where the documents relating to Carver and Plymouth were signed and the perambulation for 1941 was completed.

Although this episode of a Selectman's duties may not be spectacular or sensational, it is however, interesting, important and obligatory upon the office holder."

Next Issue (June, 1994) :

More Old Colony Club Picture Identifications, The Yankee Peddler, Dr. Senex - Hermetic Pilgrim, and more!

THE GUZZLING CURE.

[Sir DYCK DUCKWORTH, in a letter written to a Vegetarian Correspondent, says, "I believe in the value of animal food and alcoholic drinks for the best interests of man. The abuse or misuse of either is another matter."]



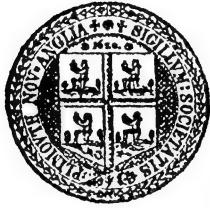
What though they warn me that at first—
It may be merely fancy—
The stomach's sure to try its worst
In base recalcitrancy?
When half-starved gastric juice is set
To cope with dainty dishes,
The outcome—one may safely bet—
Won't be just what one wishes.

O PLUMP Head-waiter, I have
read [writes!
What worthy DUCKWORTH
And that is why I've swiftly sped
To where your door invites.
I kept my indigestion down
Of old, by sheer starvation;
But now no longer shall I frown
On food assimilation.

I pledge him in your oldest port,
This medical adviser,
For vainly elsewhere might be
A cheerier or a wiser. [sought
He bids me speedily return
To ordinary diet—
A sage prescription!—and I burn
To chance results, and try it!

I've lived on air; on food for Lent;
On what some Doctor calls
"Nitrogenous environment"—
A fare that quickly palls.
I'll eat the chops I once did eat;
All care and thought I banish;
And with this unexpected treat
My old dyspeptics vanish.

This earth is rich in chemists' shops,
With doctors it abounds,
Who, if I feel the change from slops,
Will take me on their rounds.
So, scorning indigestive ache,
I count each anxious minute;
Oh, waiter, hurry up that steak!
My happiness is in it.



OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, June, 1994. Ser. 1, No. 12

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NEWS AND NOTES

Now that the regular Secretary's Newsletter has evolved into such a fount of information about the doings and comings and goings of the Club, there is little need to rehearse those events here as well. Therefore the News and Notes section which has always opened the papers in this series will be limited to those topics which are of direct concern to the subject matter in the articles and comments which appear in the Old Colony Club Quarterly itself.

In this issue, which has become unavoidably late, we will be considering only a single topic; the appearance of the Pilgrims in popular fiction. The fiction of a fiction, as it were, as the "Pilgrims" themselves are more of a mythic construction than a historical one. It is interesting to observe that while the actual historical story of the early Plymouth Colonists has been well-represented in the various accounts of our nation's origins, the images that are generally presented to our imaginations when the Pilgrims are referred to have been inspired by a series of inspirational vignettes which owe more to the romantic notions than to history. Some of these glorified events, such as the *Five Harbors of Corn* or the *First Church Service in New England* have lost their immediate potency and are no longer commonly found in popular sources, but the episodes of the *Landing on Plymouth Rock*, the *First Thanksgiving* and the *Courtship of Myles Standish* still engage the public imagination. Each of the big three events in the Pilgrim Story has its origin in actual historical circumstance, yet each modern story is essentially fictional. There is no contemporary evidence for the celebrated *Landing on the Rock* on December 11, 1620 nor the purported love triangle among Myles, Priscilla and John, and the idea that the feast in the autumn of 1621 was an official Calvinist "Thanksgiving" in the minds of those who attended, or the first in a subsequent series has no historical basis whatsoever.

We shall consider the effect of such tales on the public understanding of the Pilgrim Story and look at some of the less familiar of these fictional narratives, including possibly the weirdest of all Pilgrim tales, *The Strange Story of Doctor Senex*.

SOME PILGRIM FICTIONS

The Pilgrims are as well remembered for the stories that they inspired as they are for the actual history they created. This is not necessarily a bad thing for two reasons. Firstly, the story of the Plymouth colonists arrival in the New World and their subsequent influence on later birth of the United States would never have seized as large a share of fame and celebration as it has without the symbolic spin that the historians, poets and writers put upon it. Later than Jamestown, smaller and less influential than Boston, Plymouth would be a footnote today if the historical facts were strictly observed. Secondly, even if the historians had established the Pilgrim Story as the central origins myth that it became, its emotional grip on the American and international public would have been significantly less without the work of the Forefathers' Day story of the Landing, the romance of Priscilla, Myles and John, and the November legend of the First Thanksgiving.

Notwithstanding the quibbles of historians, these familiar stories transmuted the simple facts of history into something far grander. By elevating the mundane actions of the first colonists into heroic myths, popularizers transformed their story into an American epic and imbued the Pilgrims' actions with an importance and meaning analogous to the Biblical apotheosis of the history of certain Near Eastern tribes into the central epic of all mankind. History by itself has no particular meaning; it is the work of authors and poets to provide significance to the chronicle of human events.

These archetypes were conceived in the same way that a historical novelist constructs a story, taking a particular moment and location in the past and building a fiction around the basic historic core. In the case of the Landing, it was known that the scouting party from the Mayflower finally set foot on the mainland in Plymouth harbor on December 11, 1620. Tradition led Elder Thomas Faunce to believe that this physically took place on a large boulder at the foot of Cole's Hill. Faunce's evidence comes to us at third-hand, recorded by later historians from the testimony of witnesses to Faunce's assertion such as Deacon Spooner or Mrs. White. Yet, despite the absence of primary source confirmation, the story, if unlikely, is still

conjecturally possible. However, the fictional elements that were built upon this small foundation confused the landing of the scouting party with that of the entire Mayflower company (which didn't arrive in Plymouth until December 16, and didn't land until Monday the 18th) and places Mary Chilton and John Alden among those who first stepped on the Rock. It is the fiction which is primarily represented in the depictions of the landing scenes, not the fact, and the depictions are what determined the general conception of what occurred on the Rock in 1620.

One of the most common methods for making history meaningful is to re-tell the occurrences in narrative or story form, providing plot and characterizations that will catch the imagination of the listener. The appearance of Pilgrims in fiction (verbal or illustrational) was responsible for their popularization and dissemination in American culture. Historical stories and novels introduce the actors and events of the past and make them part of the general culture. When they become more influential than the facts themselves, the stories or legends could obscure more than they reveal about history. The fictional inventions, the made-up story elements such as characterization, imputed motivation, invented dialogue and imaginary scenic descriptions become the grist for further dramatizations, artistic renderings and political orations. The accessible fiction becomes the baby cuckoo which grabs all the attention so that the real (and usually far less exciting) event is crowded out, and it is the fiction which becomes for most people the real story while the actual history is relegated to a footnote. The result is *two* narratives with the same factual basis but with very different claims to popular acceptance and historical reality.

Sometimes, as with the *Manding*, they were simply examples of folk history. In other cases they began as straight-forward plays poems or novels. For the greater part, the fictions were simply forgotten, but on occasion, as with the *Courtship*, they were added to the common impression of the past, replacing real history once their fictional origin was forgotten. The Pilgrims have figured in a number of literary treatments since 1800. Possibly the earliest of these was a play in blank verse; Joseph Crosswell's *A New World Planted or, The Adventures of the Forefathers of New England Who Landed in Plymouth, December 22, 1620* (A Historical Drama in Five Acts, Boston: 1802). Crosswell, (or rather Joseph Crosswell, Jr.?) identified by George Willison (*Saints and Strangers*) as a Plymouth shopkeeper, lived on

Court St. just north of the Plymouth Federal/Compass Bank building. His play is a dramatization of the first years of the colony. Despite the fact that Carver is governor throughout, *A New World Planted* includes events from the first several years of the colony. The plot has Lyford, Oldham, Billington and a fictional individual, Molton (for Thomas Morton?), conspiring to overthrow "this mushroom government" and introduce Roman Catholicism and other subversions to New Plymouth. This is attempted by contriving an attack by the Narragansetts which also tries to draw Massasoit in by destroying the good feelings that first united the two peoples. Fortunately the cooperation of the colonial leaders and Massasoit foil this plot. With the help of Winslow, Standish and Hopkins on the Pilgrim side and Tisquanto, Samosett and Hobomock on the Native side as well as Captain Jones and his crew (with names such as Maintop, Binnacle, Kelsoe, Sawney and Paddy) the company survives to generously banish their enemies and have Brewster deliver a prescient synopsis of the history of the country up to 1800.

The love interest in the story comes from the subplot of "Pocahonte, a native beauty, daughter of Massasoit" and her English love interest, John Hampden. Hampden sights the lovely Pocahonte (who is wearing English clothes procured by Samoset) and inquires of Winslow about her :

"Hampden, the lady you describe is
Pocahonte,
The only daughter of King Massasoit;
She's of a lively penetrating wit,
And learn'd to speak some English of
Tisquanto:
She offered to learn me to use the bow,
To hunt the deer and shoot the flying fowl,
If I would teach my native tongue to her.
Thus we alternately employ'd our time-
I shall never forget the pleasing task
Of our excursions thro' thick shaded paths,
Hunted the various tenants of the woods.
Here sweet felicity despotic reigns,
And constantly her sov'reign power
maintains." (p. 19)

This will give some idea of the 18th century style in which the play is written. It might be noted that a John Hampden was an actual participant in a visit to Massasoit in 1623 as recorded by Winslow in his *Good Newes from New-England* (1624).

Another early Pilgrim drama is noted by Willison, who transcribes a playbill of a curious melodrama

THE PILGRIMS

Or, the landing of our Forefathers at
PLYMOUTH ROCK

In the course of the Melo Drama, the
following scenery, Incidents, &c.

A View of the Rock and Plymouth Bay, and
the landing of the Pilgrims. The whole
scene represents Winter, with a snow
storm. After returning thanks for their
safe arrival, Carver orders one of the
Pilgrims to cut on the Rock, DECEMBER
22nd, 1620, the day of the landing. [this
despite the fact that it was on *December*
11 Old Style at the time!]

An alarm of Indians...

A comic scene between an Irish Boatswain
and an Indian Woman. The perilous
situation of Juliana through the
treachery of one of the Pilgrims. The act
concludes with a GLEE and CHORUS.

In act II—Scene 1st Represents several half
finished Houses... a shell sounds to
announce the arrival of Massasoit. A
Grand INDIAN MARCH. A Treaty of Peace
and Amity... The treachery of Samoset
who tries to carry off the person of
Juliana. She struggles and seizes his
Tomahawk and pursues him—he
implores her pardon—which she grants—
he wrests the Tomahawk from her and
aims a dreadful blow, when Winslow
rushes in to her rescue—his gun misses
fire—he draws his sword and a combat
ensues—in the mean time Juliana takes
the gun at fires at Samoset without
effect—Winslow is wounded, and Samoset
pursues Juliana—who is seen ascending
a rock—she reaches the summit, and as
Samoset is following, she strikes him with
the fuzee, and he falls headlong down the
precipice...

THE INDIAN METHOD OF LYING IN AMBUSH

And the act concludes with a Procession of
Indians, carrying Winslow and Juliana on
their boughs.

In act 3, the Indians preparing to sacrifice
one of the Pilgrims.

Scene 2d.

*A dreadful Combat with Clubs and Shields,
between Samoset and Squanto.*

Scene last—A View of an Indian
Encampment, A Marriage and Nuptial
Dance,

AFTER WHICH

*The Genius of Columbia descends in a Magnificent
Temple, surrounded with clouds.*

It is easy to see how fictions such as this might
very well lead the unwary astray in matters of
history! Actually the real problem arises not in the
more obviously ridiculous stories such as the
"Melo Drama" but in historical poems or novels
which bear some resemblance to reality. At
Plimoth Plantation, we are often asked to find the
historical source for "facts" which were actually
only fictional flourishes in old books such as *Faith*
White's Letterbook (1866), *Standish of Standish*
(1889) or the original *Courtship of Myles Standish*
(1843 - Longfellow published his in 1858).

Faith White's Letterbook, which is presented as a
collection of letters describing life in Leyden and
Plymouth in the 1620s, has actually been cited as
a primary source by naive readers. As the book
opens, Faith White (age 15) lives in Leyden with
her parents and three siblings; Paul, Mary and
David (who with Mary and their grandfather soon
dies in good period fashion) and writes like a good
little literate and pious Victorian girl. She begins
her account to an imaginary friend with
descriptions of her family and friends Jasper
Moore, his sister Ellen (AKA "Little Sunshine") and
Patience Brewster, who remains behind when the
Speedwell departs. After an expanded voyage (with
various characterizations such as "quaint,
thoughtless Constantia Hopkins") and various
cute conversations they arrive at Cape Cod and
Plymouth. Her brother Peregrine is born amid
much sentimentality, before the others die with all
of the religious support of the mid-19th century.

The greater part of the text in fact is taken up with
the death-bed scenes and accompanying pious
agonizing which was so very congenial to Victorian
taste in fiction. Mrs. Bradford drowns without
rumor of suicide — that will come later with
Standish of Standish. Christmas is reluctantly
omitted with memories of celebrations back in
Holland, and log houses are erected ashore.
Eventually Faith, Paul and Peregrine endure their
father's death and their mother (or apparently,
Faith's stepmother) marries Edward Winslow.
Although the Alden/ Standish/Mullins triangle is
observed, the harvest feast with the Indians in
early October 1621 is described as just that, and

the first thanksgiving occurs as it should in the summer of 1623. Faith becomes ill and dies just after the arrival of her friend Patience, in September, 1623. As historical fiction *Faith White's Letterbook*, aside from the understandable dramatizations, is quite accurate when using the known facts, but its very verisimilitude allowed it to assume a status it never aspired to as an actual account of the early colony. Quite dated and out of fashion today, *Faith White's Letterbook* remains an interesting example of the use of the Pilgrim story for the tastes and needs of the mid-19th century.

The basic story of the well-known love triangle first appeared as a brief notice of an Alden family tradition in Rev. Timothy Alden's *American Epitaphs* (1814). Here it Rev. Alden simply says:

"Mrs. Rose Standish, consort of captain Standish, departed this life on the 29th of January, 1621. This circumstance is mentioned as an introduction to the following anecdote, which has been careful handed down by tradition.

In a very short time after the decease of Mrs. Standish, the captain was led to believe, that, if he should obtain Miss Priscilla Mullins, a daughter of Mr. William Mullins, the breach in his family would be happily repaired. He, therefore, according to the custom of those times, sent to ask Mr. Mullins' permission to visit his daughter. John Alden, the messenger, went and faithfully communicated the wishes of the captain. The old gentleman did not object, as he might have done, on account of the recency of the captain Standish's bereavement. He said it was perfectly agreeable to him, but the young lady must also be consulted. The damsel was then called into the room, and John Alden, who is said to have been a man of most excellent form with a fair and ruddy complexion, and, in a very courteous and prepossessing manner, delivered his errand. Miss Mullins listened with respectful attention, and at last, after a considerable pause, fixing her eyes on him, with an open and frank countenance, said, prithee, John, why do you not speak for yourself? He blushed, and bowed, and took his leave, but with a look, which indicated more, than his diffidence would permit him otherwise to express. However, he soon renewed his visit, and it was not long before their

nuptials were celebrated in ample form... What report he made to his constituent, after the first interview, tradition does not unfold; but it is said, how true the writer knows not, that the captain never forgave him to the day of his death."

It was from such small beginnings that the whole Courtship story emerged. The first "Courtship" was published in the *Rover*, a small weekly New York magazine (vol. I, no. 18, pp. 273-4) attributed to "Moses Mullins, 1672." It is interesting to see how the first Courtship compares with the famous Longfellow version of 15 years later:

BALLAD

Miles Standish in the May-flower came
Across the stormy wave,
And in that little band was none
More generous or brave.

Midst cold December's sleet and snow
On Plymouth Rock they land;
Weak were their hands but strong their hearts,
That pious pilgrim band.

Oh, sad it was in their poor huts
To hear the storm-winds blow;
And terrible at midnight hour,
When yell'd the savage foe.

And when the savage, grim and dire,
His bloody work began,
For a champion brave, I have been told,
Miles Standish was the man.

But, oh, his heart was made to bow
With grief and pain full low,
For sickness on the pilgrim band
Now dealt a dreadful blow.

In arms of death so fast they fell
They scarce were buried,
And his dear wife, whose name was Rose,
Was laid among the dead.

His sorrow was not loud, but deep,
For her he did bemoan,
And such keen anguish wrung his heart,
He could not live alone.

Then to John Alden he did speak,
John Alden was his friend,
And said "friend John, unto my wish
"I pray thee now attend.

"My heart is sad, 'tis very sad,

"My poor wife Rose is gone,
 "And in this wild and savage land
 "I cannot live alone.

"To Mr. William Mullins, then
 "I wish you would repair,
 "And see if he will give me leave
 "To wed his daughter fair."

Priscilla was the maiden's name;
 Comely and fair was she,
 And kind of heart she was withal,
 As any maid could be.

John Alden, to oblige his friend,
 Straightway to Mullins went,
 And told his errand like a man,
 And ask'd for his consent.

Now Mr. Mullins was a sire
 Quite rational and kind,
 And such consent would never give,
 Against his daughter's mind.

He told John Alden, if his child
 Should be inclin'd that way,
 And Captain Standish was her choice,
 He had no more to say.

He then call'd in his daughter dear,
 And straightway did retire,
 That she might with more freedom speak,
 In absence of her sire.

John Alden had a bright blue eye,
 And was a handsome man,
 And when he spoke, a pleasant look
 O'er all his features ran.

He rose, and in a courteous way
 His errand did declare,
 And said, "fair maid, what word shall I
 To Captain Standish bear?"

Warm blushes glow'd upon the cheeks
 Of that fair maiden then:
 At first she turn'd away her eyes,
 Then look'd at John again;

And then, with downcast modest mien,
 She said with trembling tone,
 "Now prithee, John, why dost thou not
 Speak for thyself alone?"

Deep red then grew John Alden's face;
 He bade the maid good bye;
 But well she read, before he went,
 The language of his eye.

No matter what the language said,
 Which in that eye was rife—
 In one short month Priscilla was
 John Alden's loving wife.

It was when Samuel Wordsworth Longfellow, who was by-the-by a descendant of Standish and Alden, took the story and composed his version of the Courtship that it became a universally known legend of the Pilgrims.

Jane G. Austen's *Standish of Standish* is another well-crafted (if like the previous book of a quite obsolete literary fashion) historical novel. It covers the colony story from the "First Monday Washday" on November 23 at Provincetown to Standish's proposal to his ostensible cousin Barbara in 1623. Her view of history is well summed up in a statement about the famous Treaty with Massasoit:

Facts are stubborn things and History is sacred, and the scene just described in all its details simple matter of History [!], but it is not a singular irony of fate that we who spend our lives in a crusade against strong drink and tobacco must, nevertheless, despair of rivaling the virtues of these men, who began their solemn covenant with the savages they had come to Christianize, by giving them gin [or actually brandy], and ended it by accepting from them tobacco?¹

Facts are fine and so is embellishment if there are enough facts embedded in it, but how much better it *could* have been. Since *Standish of Standish* is still generally available in second hand bookshops (it went through several editions and was adapted for the stage), I won't provide a précis of the story, but simply list the various legends that are given support in the narrative. Among these are:

- The First New England Monday Washday (page 1). While it is true that the *Mayflower* women did go ashore on the date cited to wash clothes after the long voyage, there is no evidence to suggest that this was the origin of the later traditional washday. Then again, as with using the Rock as a landing place, there is no evidence to the contrary either.
- That John Alden's height as six feet (page 7).
- That the Mullins (or "Molines") family were French Huguenots or Walloons — Priscilla is famous for her onion soup — which was later exploded when Mullin's immediate Dorking, Surrey, origin was subsequently discovered (p.14).

¹ Austin, Jane G. *Standish of Standish*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1892, p. 195.

- That Samuel Fuller was an official doctor (and even served at St. Bartholomew's in London - p. 3).
- That Captain Jones was an ex-pirate and slaver (p.4). This calumny has no basis in fact, and was derived from the mis-identification of one Thomas Jones, master of another *Mayflower* who had in fact been a slaver before it was determined by M.R.G. Marsden in 1904 that it was a *Christopher Jones* whose *Mayflower* brought the Pilgrims to America. She also relates the old story that Jones was bribed by the Dutch not to bring them to their original destination at the mouth of the Hudson River, but as this was believed in Secretary Morton's day, there is no call to criticize even if modern scholars have rejected the claim.
- Log Cabins, as was generally believed at the time (p. 101).
- Mary Chilton is given credit as first woman on the Rock (p.180).
- Priscilla is seated at her spinning wheel when John arrives on his famous errand (p.245), and the immortal line about speaking for himself is uttered (p.249).
- The Frenchman's Curse, traditionally believed to have been uttered by one of the unfortunate captives on Cape Cod, with deadly result to the Natives (p. 258)
- The First Thanksgiving is developed in a grand manner (p.278), with the Thursday in November date (amid a burst of Indian Summer both in 1621 and the two years following- p.282).
- Quadequina is credited with bringing popped corn to the first feast (p. 281).

Mrs. Austin does avoid (except by implication) asserting that Dorothy Bradford definitely committed suicide in Provincetown harbor, and she actually dismisses the "Pulpit Rock" story for Clark's Island but by in large she labors to good purpose to use not only most actual events of the history, but most of the legends as well in developing her tale. She brings in the scallop shell and the term "pilgrim" at Thanksgiving even suggests a use of a non-carbonated proto-root beer by the Indians. It is not a bad book, but how effective it has been in setting the legends in cultural concrete!

There are no *early* Thanksgiving stories. There is no mention of the now famous dinner of the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag in the autumn of 1621 in any secondary source before the 1830s, as the whole idea of a "First Thanksgiving" with the Pilgrims and the Indians, which was drawn

from the harvest celebration described in Winslow's letter in *Mourt's Relation* (1622), had been forgotten and apparently no one had a copy of that rare book in the period when the Pilgrims first became popular. In early works on the Pilgrims² the harvest is simply noted following Bradford's mention of it. New England scholars relied on an abridged version of Mourt that had been published in *Purchas His Pilgrims* (Samuel Purchas' 1626 collection of voyages and explorations that continued Richard Hakluyt's earlier compilation) which omitted the famous description of the feast. The missing elements were not discovered until 1822 when the Massachusetts Historical Society secured a copy of the original Mourt's from Philadelphia and published the passages omitted from Purchase. It was only in 1844 when Alexander Young, in publishing the entire text of *Mourt's Relation* in his *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, misidentified the harvest celebration as a "first thanksgiving" that the idea appeared at all, and it took years before the idea caught on. After Young presented the idea, it turned up from time to time but the association between the Plymouth Pilgrims and the Thanksgiving holiday did not become dominant until after 1900.

However, there are other stories that have never achieved popular appeal. Some even omit the Pilgrims themselves while trading on well-known names from the Plymouth story. A curious dime novel, *Massasoit's Daughter; or, The French Captives* by A.J.H. Duganne which was published by Beadle and Adams of New York in 1861, is a story of various Europeans (including Louis de Luzerne, his sister Marie, Abbe Claude, Captain Pierre, Robin Ball and Captain Pierce, Lopez the Spaniard) shipwrecked off Plymouth and captured by the Pequods on Mt. Wachusett. Inspired by the

² None of the following have any reference to a 1621 "Thanksgiving": Nathaniel Morton, *New England's Memorial* (1669); Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702); Thomas Prince, *A Chronological History of New England* (1736); Hannah Adams, *An Abridgement of the History of New England For the Use of Young Persons* (1805); Thomas Robbins, *An Historical View of the First Planters of New-England* (1815); John Davis in his extensive notes to the 1826 edition of Morton's *New England's Memorial*; Francis Baylies, *An Historical Memoir of the Colony of New Plymouth* (1830); *The Pilgrim Fathers, or the Lives of Some of the First Settlers of New England, Designed for Sabbath School Libraries* (1830); James Thatcher, *A History of the Town of Plymouth* (1832). After Young, the idea is presented in W.S. Russell's *Guide to Plymouth and Recollections of the Pilgrims* (1846), but was omitted from subsequent editions of his *Pilgrim Memorials, and Guide to Plymouth* (1851, 1855, 1864) which may indicate its relative importance in the Pilgrim Story at that time.

story of the 6 or so French sailors enslaved by the Natives shortly before the arrival of the Pilgrims, the "French Captives" under go various hair-raising adventures which feature Tisquantam and his daughter Monoma as Iroquois, and Massasoit and his daughter Princess Sameeda as Narragansett, of all things!

However, the most curious story with Pilgrim associations that I have found is E.E. Baldwin's *The Strange Story of Doctor Senex*. Published in 1891 by the Minerva Publishing Company in New York, *Doctor Senex* opens in upstate New York when a lawyer, George Marsh, is summoned out on "a dark and stormy night" by an old man in Revolutionary War era clothes to visit the mysterious Dr. Senex. Taken to an ancient mansion, he encounters the Doctor in a strange domed room lit by a lamp fashioned as a silver skull whose only furniture is a huge clock "with a dial as unique as the lamp. It was marked off in circles and segments in exact counterpart to the [four colored circles on the tiled] floor, but with the addition, that at the end of each segment were carved figures, representing the four epochs in man's existence, beginning with a child at the upper; a youth at the right; a man in his prime at the lower, and old age at the top." He then meets the Doctor himself, a man with long white hair, strong features and a piercing eye who informs him he has less than a day to live, as measured by the strange clock.

Senex takes Marsh to a laboratory where he tells him that as he has known his father, grandfather, great-grandfather and perhaps earlier ancestors, that he has chosen him to be his executor and trustee. Senex then mixes a few drops from two vials and sprinkles some powder on it and drinks the mixture — which transforms him in a virile young man for a few minutes until the clock strikes four, whereupon he just as suddenly becomes an incredibly old man, and dies. Marsh is left in the alchemical laboratory with the inevitable manuscript which tells Senex's story, which he is to read a year later after the Doctor's funeral.

Doctor Senex is a story of a Hermetic mage who discovered the secret of long if not eternal life, and not unusual for that — except that we find that Senex came to America as a teenager aboard the Mayflower in 1620! Son of one Sebastian Senex and his wife Mary, the boy grows to rebel against the strictures of Plymouth Colony life, refusing to keep the Sabbath. Summoned by the elders, he goes to the log meetinghouse where he declares "I prefer the green fields and shady forests to this gloomy, artificial, narrow prison which you are

pleased to call the 'Temple of the Lord.' I loathe this structure, I loathe your canting creed, I loathe the unnatural regulations you seek to impose upon us as individuals and as a community. I have nothing to extenuate, nothing to regret—save the anguish my public punishment may cause my parents. I prize first my liberty, and next to that my honesty of conviction; if they are in conflict with your ordinances, punish me for them, but never hope for my retraction or repentance. Do your worst!"

Sentenced to be whipped in the pillory, he is pardoned through the entreaties of his father and is sent back to Europe where he enters the service of a Dr. Frederick Heingardt in Amsterdam. It is here that Senex learns about alchemy and assists his master in a fatal experiment to achieve physical regeneration. Following the death of Heingardt, the novel follows the usual pattern of such stories and has no further Plymouth connections. Senex travels to Alexandria as an older man where he encounters a strange old librarian, Artixus, who has inherited the last few hundred books from the great Library of Alexandria which are hidden away under some ruins. Senex follows the old man and sees the collection (much to the Librarian's distress) just before it and its custodian are lost in a fire.

Senex however saves two scrolls which give him the secret of renewing life through certain drugs and the transfusion of the blood of a younger person into the body of the older. After some further wandering he arrives in England where he is able to save the life of a young Dr. Novus. They become partners in the quest and Senex convinces his friend to try the experiment for the sake of knowledge and science. However, once it is underway and Novus' vitality restores youth to Senex, Novus repents his decision and curses his mentor before dying as a worn out husk. Senex, now quite different in appearance, escapes detection and takes up with Novus' girl friend who doesn't recognize him. He falls in love with her and later saves her from death through his knowledge of esoteric medicine, but the curse has its effect as the girl becomes demented and later dies. Senex then moves to Paris where he is able to take the vital force out of a young would-be Rosicrucian who is an inmate in a mental institution. Following this last depredation he re-emigrates to America and settles in the upstate New York town where he repents his vampiric career and the story passes to lawyer Marsh.

The *Doctor Senex* story has only a bit on the Pilgrims but it is a very revealing bit. It shows how historical fiction not only informs our impressions

of the past, but how our impressions of the present determines the meaning in the historical fiction we find acceptable. Although it is not often recognized, there was a strong minority position during the 19th century which rejected the Pilgrims and saw them not as representatives of all that was good in the nation's traditions but rather as either "damned Yankees" or as Puritans who by the end of the century had become emblematic of all of the hypocrisy and repressiveness of the Victorian Era. What we see in Senex's youthful and wilful rebellion against the Plymouth Elders reflected the contemporary rebellion of modern youth against Victorian sanctimonious and restriction.

The Pilgrim image in the national imagination therefore not only created the positive stereotypes of the Pilgrims that we all grew up with, but was seized on by those who resented their "works" as a symbol of what was wrong or ludicrous with American society. However, the positive image proved stronger, and despite the calumniators and

debunkers of the '90s and '20s, they retained their inspirational role through popular art and fiction, at least until now. The question remains now whether the Pilgrims; archetypes of "Eurocentricism" and other no-no's of our current crop of multicultural debunkers, will retain their position as exemplars of the American Way, or whether they will suffer the fate of Columbus to be cast as villains in the annals of popular history. It will not be serious history that determines their fate, but rather the same popular press and public art which was responsible for their meteoric rise to American mythic status. So stay tuned and see what the next generation receives as the Images of the Pilgrims — it should be interesting as well as revealing of the state of our national soul.

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Next Issue (September, 1994) :

More Old Colony Club Picture Identifications, The Yankee Peddler, and more!



THE MEN WHO INAUGURATED THANKSGIVING DAY.



# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, September, 1994. Ser. 1, No.13

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## NEWS AND NOTES

Since our last number, the Club has had a modest success at our yard sale, which as Gray Perry noted, received less than first class support from the membership. We did as always enjoy the annual Club Clambake chez McKenna, despite our President's indisposition and the occasional shower (or in Alan Zanotti's case, sudden flood). We note with true sorrow and regret the passing of our long time member and Former president John Petrell. The other adventure was the Club's Pilgrim Progress on August 26. Again, there might have been a better turnout for the event amongst the membership (your editor, John Talcott, Skip Taylor, Jim Cotter and Alan Zanotti being the costumed parties involved), but the Club was done proud by the number of relations (women and children) who became involved in particular through the recruiting efforts of Alan, Jack Spencer and Bernie Sampson's sister Arnie.

## THE OLD COLONY CLUB PICTURE COLLECTION (II)

Picture # 5 in Mr. Jenks catalogue is:

"The Old Diman House, Court Street.

Now, 1933, a vacant lot, next north from the property of the Methodist Church, Corner of Court and Brewster Streets. Howland Street was laid out in 1728 by Thomas Howland. All lots from this point as far as the lot on the corner of North Street can be traced to the Howland family from Thomas Southworth, son-in-law of Gov. Bradford and father-in-law of Joseph Howland.

The Diman lot sold in 1758 to Thomas Crandon, who sold it to Daniel Diman in 1769, who built the house shown in the picture. It was owned and occupied by Diman and his descendants until about 1927 when it was demolished. Thomas Diman the last owner."

The vacant Diman lot at 33 Court St. was acquired Telephone Company and the present building was built on it. Actually there was and is a lot between the Diman property and the former Methodist Church (now the Beth Jacob

Community Center), which houses the offices of Sherman Gellar today.

Picture #6:

"Old Powder House - Erected 1770.

Built by the town at the northwesterly end of Burial Hill and was removed within the memory of the present generation (W.T. Davis 1906).

It was intended as a place of deposit powder belonging to the town. A vote later passed by the town required all powder brought into the town by any person be placed in it, except amounts [not] exceeding fifty pounds in the hands of any trader, and twenty pounds in the hands of any other inhabitant.

Built originally of brick, it was later firred, boarded and shingled.

In 1921 the Sons of the American Revolution, Massachusetts Society, built a replica of this ancient house on the same spot, their contribution to the Tercenary Celebration."

Picture # 7:

"Court Street.

This picture taken from a point on Court Street near the present armory, looking south."

Picture # 8:

"Ropewalk Pond.

The widening of Town Brook between Market Street and Water Street caused by the dam built at Water Street by the Robbins Cordage Company, 1838. This dam [was] the last water privilege on Town Brook before the water of the Brook entered the harbor.

It was a shallow, muddy pond, in fact it was the original mouth of Town Brook, once flooded at high tide and where the Pilgrim shallop probably anchored.

The back gardens of the house of the Pilgrims on Leyden Street run down to this brook.

Portions of the old Robbins Ropewalk afterwards used by E. & J.C. Barnes, can be seen.

The Barnes Brothers carried on many kinds of manufacturing business, a Planing mill, Box factory, Cooper shop, a Kit Lathe, ground Gypsum rock in to plaster and general wood work."

Today the old pond, divided in 1908 by the new Main Street Extension bridge, has been replaced by Bewster Gardens (ca. 1924). The Barnes factory was opposite the entrance to the park, on the brookside.

### THE YANKEE PEDDLER

We can't say that we've ever seriously watched the QVC home shopping channel on the box, although we've caught glimpses surfing by on the lookout for something palatable to watch. By all accounts, however, TV huckstering is quite successful and lots of people call and order the things being waved at them on the screen. This purports to be part of the great electronic communications wave of the future, whereby we will find more and more of our acquisition of knowledge and objects being brought to us in the comfort of our fireside (or rather glowing screen-side). This technological invasion may appear revolutionary at first glance, but it can also be seen as a revival of an ancient practice that has almost disappeared in America in the past half-century or so. In essence, the QVC channel and its congenitors are simply the old-fashioned door-to-door salesmen and peddlers brought up to date. Of course we now have only the image of a huckster instead of one in the flesh to deal with, but the essence is the same.

It wasn't all that long ago that there was a steady stream of people coming to our doors offering goods and services. Even doctors made house calls. Also, every neighborhood had its own small grocery store and other shops where the necessities could be retrieved on foot. Beyond that there was the Sears' catalogue for those things that weren't available in one's immediate vicinity. Then the tide turned and it became necessary to get into cars and chase off to shops, offices and malls after the things that were once brought to our doors. Families who had never thought of having automobiles before World War II found that it was necessary to become mobile. Peddlers ceased to opportune us on our doorsteps and the local groceries closed down. Now even the Sears' catalogue has departed. In a generation or two patterns of New England life that had slowly evolved over the past 300

years were superseded by the shopping center, mall and supermarket.

Before it is entirely forgotten, it might be good to consider this world we have lost. The Yankee peddler in particular was such a stalwart part of New England life as to almost be symbolic of the region. From the 17th century peddlers set out with their wares along the roads and by-ways of New England and further into the colonies. It was the Yankee peddler who followed the pioneers westward, and brought the requisites for civilized life to the back of beyond. Regionally, the peddler served as a conduit for goods and services across the dispersed New England farms and villages and also brought products from the rural areas to the larger towns.

We tend to think of the colonial household as largely self-sufficient. In many ways it was, compared to our need to acquire from elsewhere almost everything we use or consume, but even in the earliest days of the colonies there were many things which had to be bought to make life possible. In the beginning such items as books, pins, buttons, cloth, pewter, ironware, glassware, spices and such commodities came from England aboard vessels which left their consignments at coastal ports such as Boston or Plymouth. From there the goods were dispersed into local shops or sent inland for others to sell. A proportion, however, became the stock of the wandering peddlers who would carry these into the smaller communities and to the outlying farms so that the manufactured necessities and small luxuries of the Old World were made available to all.

By the time of the Revolution many of the items were being made in New England itself, and the region became famous not only for its shrewd salesmen but for the many regional products they made available. Some, such as cotton yard goods, shoes, Connecticut clocks and tinware, were well received throughout the country, especially in the South and West where such small manufactures did not exist. Others, such as the re-dried tea, adulterated flour, oakleaf cigars and wooden nutmegs, or at least rumors of such dubious things, gave the Yankee peddler a rather dubious reputation. Certainly the peddler was by necessity a careful trader, and the fame of the Yankee trader was secure. An old story



illustrates the savvy attributed to the wandering peddler:

"I calculate I can't drive a trade with you today," said a yankee pedlar, at the door of a merchant.

"You calculate about right then, for you cannot," was the reply.

"Wal, you needn't get huffy about it—now here's a dozen genuine razor strops, worth all of two dollars and a half—you may have 'em for two dollars."

"I tell you I don't want any of your trash; so be off."

"Wal, now, I declare! I bet you five dollars if you make me an offer for them strops, we'll have a trade yet."

"Done!" says the merchant, placing five dollars in the hands of a bystander. The Yankee deposited a like sum—when the merchant offered him a picayune [about 6.25 cents] for the strops.

"They are yourn," said the pedlar, as he quietly pocketed the wager, amid the shouts of a laughing crowd.<sup>1</sup>

Along with the things for sale or trade the peddler was a source of news and gossip and a link to the outside world for people who seldom strayed outside of their small local sphere.

"A peddler was usually welcome at the home of virtually any settler. In the first place his goods were needed, his news from the city eagerly awaited, and isolated pioneers were always glad to have the company. He did not have the social status of the settled merchant, but he was by no means a tramp or a ne'er-do-well—indeed most peddlers were of a respectable family background, and were peddlers only when young; sooner or later, when they had found a suitable spot, they settled down. Nowadays the word peddler is somewhat derogatory...

But through the greater part of the nineteenth century things were not that way at all. A peddler was invited into a settler's home, seated and given a glass of cider while the housewife called her husband from the fields and the family just to look at a man who had actually been in Marietta or Warren and could tell them all the news and gossip for miles around. Even a few weeks of training the peddler would have learned just how

long he could permit this to go on before he opened his pack, or led them out to the wagon and got started on his real business in life"<sup>2</sup>

There were of course many levels of peddling. At the bottom was the fellow who carried his small stock on his back as he went on foot along his route. As Dolan noted above, this was a popular activity for young men to indulge in before they settled down in life. A fellow could get a basic kit which might consist of one or two tin trunks slung on his back with straps, or some sort of arrangements of baskets, and set off on his adventure on the road.

"The fact of youth is important. The first peddlers had to be reckless, bright young fellows with abundant grit and virility, capable of taking care of themselves. They had to cope with the potentialities and dangers of long and solitary stretches of wilderness between towns—the trackless way, the fearsome beasts and the insolent Indian. To venture a peddling journey from Connecticut to Georgia would excite more comment, fear, and local wonder than a journey to Tibet today. These youths had to supply much of their own food and slept in the open most of the time. Men who could not venture this could venture anything."<sup>3</sup>

The goods carried by foot peddlers were by necessity small and useful, which used to be called "notions": pins, needles, thread, buttons, ribbons, lace, combs, knives, brushes, razors, jew's harps, cheap jewelry, small books and such stuff. These were also the very things that the remote buyer could not get made locally. Other peddlers traveled by pack-horse, cart or wagon (or pung in the winter) which allowed them to carry any number of bulky items from medical nostrums, furniture, brass, iron or tinware, pottery, baskets, brooms, clocks and so forth.

There were a great many other itinerants sharing the roads and lane with the peddlers. At a time where most people stayed put and agriculture was the primary occupation, the only way to reach and supply them was to take to the road. At the top of the social scale,

<sup>1</sup> Rutland Herald, Nov. 16, 1843 (quoted in Dorson Jonathan Draws the Longbow, p. 80)

<sup>2</sup> Dolan, J.R. *The Yankee Peddlers of Early America*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1964. p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Wright, Richardson. *Hawkers & Walkers in Early America*. Philadelphia: J.P. Lippencott, 1927. p. 21.

justice was applied on 3 circuits (Eastern, Middle and Southern) after the American Revolution. Itinerant preachers held camp meetings and revivals, while traveling doctors and dentists attended patients along their routes. Almost any trade or activity had its travelers: limners (portrait or sign painters), lecturers, entertainers of all sorts, shoemakers, chair seaters, tailors, tinsmiths and all.

However, the real scope and profit in peddling dissipated with the arrival of better transport on canals and railways, and the growth in population made it possible to have stores and shops within reach of most customers. A number of fortunes had been made from a beginning in peddling from General (and villain) Benedict Arnold to C. P. Huntington, the railway tycoon who founded the Huntington Library, Frederick T. Stanley of Stanley Tools, George Hartford, who founded the A & P, and Richard W. Sears, of Sears and Roebuck. However, while itinerants and salesmen continue to travel in trade, the old peddlers are more or less extinct.

### Some Plymouth Peddlers

Plymouth has also seen its share of peddlers, but few have left any real mark on history. In the town directory for 1860, for example, Thomas Bartlett of High St., Joseph N. Bates of Halfway Ponds, and Solomon Faunce, 32 High St. were all listed as peddlers, but there were undoubtedly others who acted on a part-time or temporary basis. One Plymouth peddler, a dealer in fish who achieved considerable notoriety, was of course Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Without doubt he would have completely disappeared into history if he had been left alone to ply his piscine trade and hadn't gotten caught up in the anti-radical panic that swept the country after World War I.

The ephemeral character of these itinerants makes living memory the easiest source for examples. When we were young and living up Summer St. in the 1940s and '50s, there were a number of peddlers and itinerants that came around on a regular basis. Some, such as the scissors' grinder with his portable sharpening stone, came from out of town, but others were local. The most interesting was old Mr. Johnson, who lived in the large yellow house on the corner of Summer and Edes Sts., the grandfather of a friend. Mr. J. made his way slowly on a rusty old bicycle offering the

natural resources of the Plymouth area. He apparently knew the best sources for all sorts of plants and flowers. In the spring I believe he offered mayflowers, but these were soon superseded with fragrant white pond lilies, then various berries and wild fruits in season such as blueberries, dangleberries, beach plums and such, and in the fall he brought bittersweet vines.

Another quite different itinerant was Harry Frim, the junk dealer. Harry, who collected junk and other materials with a rough old horse and wagon which he kept in the stables on Vacant Lane (which connected Russell St. and Edes St.), was a fearsome old character to the kids who lived in the Summer St. area. He had very heavy features and a surly temper towards those who teased him by calling him "Onions." This taunt would bring indignant growls and slurred (his teeth were mostly gone) expletives, and frequently a snap of his whip. People who knew him better, however, said that he was a kindly old fellow (we can attest that, on occasion, he could be quite pleasant even to small boys). Harry had apparently had an interesting career before he retired to Plymouth from out west, where he had been a (Jewish) chuckwagon boss in cowboy country.

Other mobile services included milkmen (both Hood's and Nook Farm), icemen and even a grocer. This was Mr. Capozucca and his cheerful son Dick, who came by in a van full of fruits, vegetables and things. Other peddlers included Mr. Kaplowitz, who brought various "notions" around which people bought we gather as a sort of charity, as he had some sort of speech impediment. There were, earlier, several men who made rounds selling chickens and eggs, such as Henry Quartz from Rocky Nook, or Jack Brenner's uncle Frank who lived on Cherry Court. Then there was Bennie Dretler, who worked out of one of the Sandwich St. houses on the site of Friendly's Restaurant as an itinerant tailor. There were other fish peddlers besides Vanzetti, making their rounds to the sound of their tin trumpets. Tom Brewer calls to mind a Middle Eastern gentleman who circuited Plymouth selling lace each summer, and another fellow who sold brooms and ladders from a wagon. Various services were provided by Joe Manter (of Manter's Point) who provided firewood in season and did ploughing for people as well. Before the advent of modern septic systems,

Plymouth was serviced by the men who rode the "honey wagons" with what is today the unimaginable trade of cleaning out everyone's outhouse pits! There were, obviously, many more now forgotten or at least beyond our knowledge. If any member can recall other peddlers, he might be so good as to let us know so they can be recorded before the memories of the "men of the road" are lost for good.

The other change noted earlier is the departure of the neighborhood grocery. Before mobility triumphed, there were a number of small stores scattered throughout the town so that every housewife could do her regular shopping afoot (and every child could take inordinate amounts of time deciding on the suitable way to spend a few pennies on candy). These stores seemed to change hands and move about with some regularity, appearing here and then there as economics and ambition dictated. On Summer St., we chiefly remember Eddie Clough's Market at number 84 (on the west corner of Summer and Willard Place, which had been Atwood's Grocery in the 1880s). There was an earlier Edward Clough's grocery at 87 Summer as early as 1893, which moved across the street by 1920. Curiously, there was a Richard Clough living on Summer St. (then called High St.) as early as 1638. There was a Rogan's Grocery at number 85 (or 87), and Rogan's Dry Goods on the corner of High and Summer Sts. in 1920 (and briefly afterward in our memory). Further down Summer St. was Taub's Grocery on the north side of the street at number 27, and of course several markets on Market St., such as the South Centre Market and People's Market. The other notable market for a child was Saracca's at 36 Sandwich St., which had a marvelous selection of candy and comics.

Today both the corner groceries and the peddlers have long departed, and while we can avail ourselves of the huge supermarkets (more very day, apparently) or the pricey "convenience stores" for groceries, the loss of the older shops and services has left us dependent on an ever more standardized and impersonal process of getting the things we need. Time hurries on, as if by modern transport today as well!

PLIMOTH PLANTATION—DUXBURY DID  
IT FIRST?

## "Pilgrim Plymouth

## Rises Anew Amid Duxbury Woodlands

*Huge Palisaded Colony of Log Houses  
With Fortress Tower Brings Back Days  
of Pilgrims And Indians—Palisade Is 12  
Feet High With Elevated Gallery  
Protected By 4-Foot  
Breastwork—Lumbermen From Maine  
To Build Replica Of Early Plymouth  
Settlement At Camp Wing In Heart Of*

### *Duxbury Woodland.*

Promises To Become Most Interesting  
Historical Monument In All New England.

Entirely surrounded by a 12-foot log palisade with a gallery four guards to walk four feet below the pointed tops, a Pilgrim colony is arising in Duxbury woods. Towering over the formidable looking palisade is a block-house fortress, small at the base, but expanding into a large square tower with windows for many men-at-arms. Beyond the fortress in quadrangle layout, stand three imposing log houses as large as the original common-house, each with huge stone fireplace [sic] large enough in which to roast an ox. In the walls of each are small holes through which shots may be taken at any Indians who manage to get over the palisade walls.

### EXCITINGLY REAL

In this setting at one time as romantic and as historic as expert log men imported from the famous old town of Old Town, Maine, can make it, the boys of the Boston Boys' club of greater Boston will spend their summer months. For them, it will be as exciting as a Wild West movie, but for the rest of the world this unique camp will have a decided historic interest. Set in an undeveloped woodland area, this palisaded colony will serve to give all tourists and residents of this locality a vivid picture of just what the early life of the Pilgrims was like. Looking through the small apertures in the block house out over the palisaded walls, one can see even now the shadows of blood-thirsty Indians as they dart from the cover of one tree to the next.

### PRIMITIVE RUGGEDNESS

Of course the huge buildings house some concealed modern conveniences and some concealed modern plumbing, but for the most part they have a genuine primitive aspect, beautiful in its manly ruggedness.

The Maine men who are building the "colony" state that it is the closest they [c]an come to a replica of the Pilgrim colony, and that there is



nothing else like it in the modern world except the log lodges used by the lumberjacks in the Maine woods.

### RUSTIC BEDS

The buildings are perhaps much larger than those built by the Pilgrims except for their common house, and the huge rough interiors have an almost feudal aspect. The logs are all creosoted and the cracks are stuffed on the outside with caulking to make them weather-tight. The creosote protects the logs against decay and also discourages mosquitoes. Each of the buildings has a small "attic" space opening into the great center hall or a complete "attic" space where beds are provided for the boys. The beds are made of whole trees used as posts, and split trees used as braces. Two springs braced between the posts provide sleeping space for two young campers in each bed, one above the other.

### READY FOR USE

The buildings are already completed and ready for use; the block house will soon be completed and the palisade is now taking

shape. Inside the outer 12-foot wall of eight feet which will be joined at the top of the outer wall[sic], providing a walk for "look-outs" and defenders who will still be protected by the extra four feet of the outer palisade.

### A CHARITY GIFT

This remarkable community has been made possible by charitable donations to the Wing camp which serves boys from Greater Boston every summer. It is located just north of the buildings formerly used by the camp and has been appropriately erected in the woods away from all clearings, intensifying the realism of this replica of early Plymouth. All visitors will enjoy the sight tremendously, and it is sure to prove one of the most interesting historic "monuments" in the whole Plymouth district."

*The Old Colony Memorial, May 4, 1939*

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Next Issue (December, 1994) :

More Old Colony Club Picture Identifications, the Dispute Concerning the History of Our Clubhouse, and more!

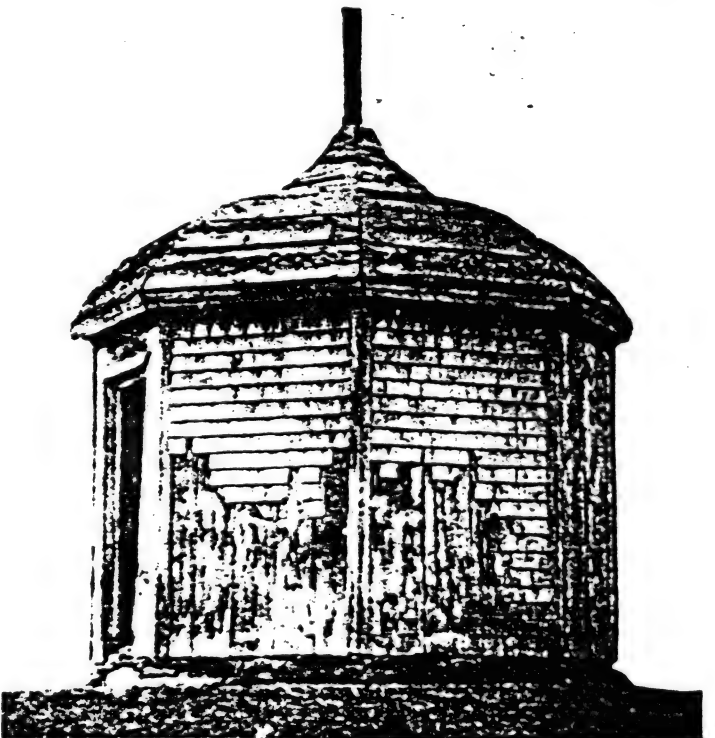


When the peddler's pitch could be as much entertainment as it was a come-on....





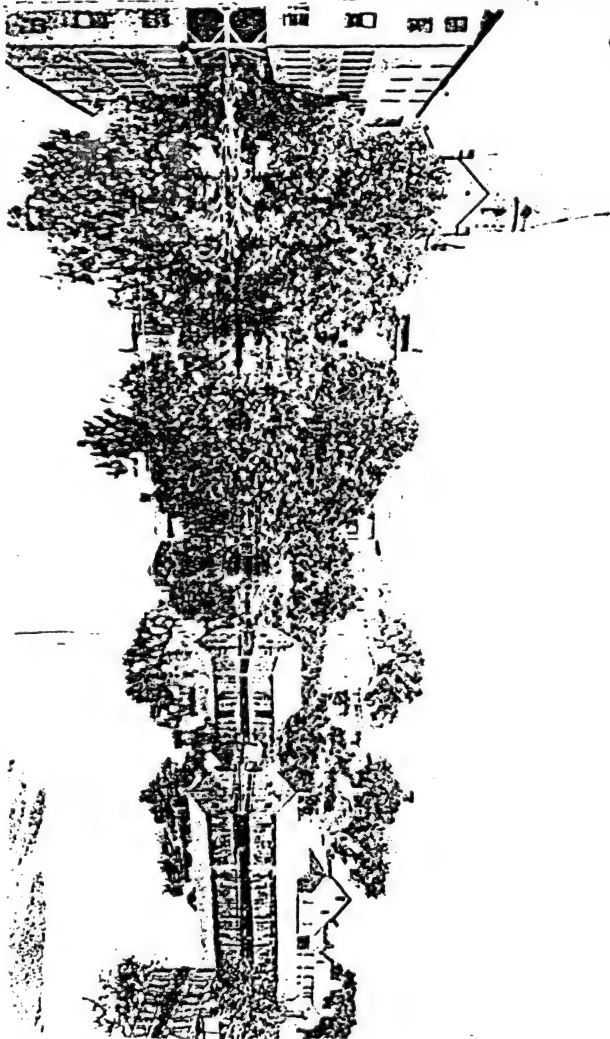
5



6



7



8

YESTERDAY . . . The Town Brook about 1890, bordered by an old armory and roller

OLD COLONY & NEWPORT RAILWAY  
AND

**STEAMER CANONIGUS.**

**GRAND EXCURSION**

FROM

**PLYMOUTH AND WAY STATIONS**

to

**ROCKY POINT!**

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 18th, 1868.**

*An Extra Train will leave as follows:*

|               |           | Fare for the<br>Round Trip. |                 |           | Fare for the<br>Round Trip. |
|---------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Plymouth at   | 6.40 A.M. | \$1.65                      | S. Abington at  | 7.20 A.M. | \$1.35                      |
| Kingston,     | 6.50 "    | 1.65                        | Abington,       | 7.05 "    | 1.40                        |
| Plympton,     | 6.58 "    | 1.60                        | N. Abington,    | 6.57 "    | 1.40                        |
| Halifax,      | 7.02 "    | 1.50                        | S. Weymouth,    | 6.45 "    | 1.50                        |
| Hanson,       | 7.10 "    | 1.45                        | E. Bridgewater, | 7.35 "    | 1.20                        |
| North Hanson, | 7.15 "    | 1.40                        |                 |           |                             |

Connecting at Fall River with Steamer "CANONIGUS," Capt. WM. H. BORDEN, arriving at Rocky Point about 10 A.M.

 The Abington Brass Band will  
\*accompany the Excursion.

**RETURNING,**

Will leave Rocky Point at 5 o'clock, P.M.

W. H. BULLOCK, Sup't.

Boston, Aug. 1, 1868.



# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, December, 1994. Ser. 1, No.14

1

## NEWS AND NOTES

The usual problem of other projects and assignments (including a history of Plymouth business and industry for the up-coming 375th anniversary in 1995) has made the composition of the Quarterly a bit hurried and hasty. As I have not had the time to do anything original or complex this time around, I must beg the reader's indulgence and hope that the following material on the origins of our Clubhouse and the fate of the 1831 First Church will suffice as historic fodder until next time, which will come rushing up soon enough in March, 1995.

### Which House is Our House?

Among the various papers which are available to us about the history of the Club there is a "History of the Old Colony Clubhouse" which was researched by Frank N. Houghton during Past President Edgar Spear's tenure in 1979:

HISTORY OF  
THE OLD COLONY CLUBHOUSE  
20 Court Street, Plymouth, MA  
-Frank N. Houghton

The clubhouse now occupied by the Old Colony was bought from Sarah W. Sherman, wife of Everett, in 1893. She bought it the same year from Charles S. Davis, who acquired it from Helen Whitman, wife of W. H. Whitman. Helen was the widow of William Davis; she acquired the property in 1886 through his will and by deed from William S. Robbins.

One of the conveyances from Robbins brought the northern border of the lot to the newly laid out Brewster Street. Robbins, who held the property as a tenement house, had acquired it from Georgiana Hedge in 1878. It had been conveyed to her by John J. Russell in 1871. Russell purchased the property in 1860 for \$1550.00. at public auction conducted by Isaac L. Hedge, administrator of the will of Josiah Cotton. Josiah, who died in 1819 or possibly a little earlier, left the property to his wife, Priscilla, who lived there until her death in 1859. Josiah had bought the property in 1789 from Nathaniel Harlow. Nathaniel had the land in 1786 from Joanna White, widow of Gideon White and daughter of Thomas Howland. At

that time (1786) the lot had a barn standing on it, which Nathaniel converted into the house now standing and then sold it to Josiah Cotton. Josiah occupied the house for many years and added the projection on the southerly end which he used as an office.

Special thanks to Frank N. Houghton, who took the time and effort to search records and compile the history of the clubhouse currently occupied by the Old Colony Club.

Edgar W. Spear, President  
August 1979"

This history was provided to members at the time, which included Plymouth historian Allen D. Russell. Mr. Russell took exception (as he often did) to the research and its conclusions. In the following letter to President Spear, he sets down to his satisfaction the real history of our old Clubhouse:

26 North St.  
Plymouth, Mass. 02360  
Oct. 10, 1979

Edgar W. Spear, President  
Old Colony Club  
25 Court St. Plymouth, Mass. 02360

Dear Mr. President,

As one of the newer members of the Old Colony Club I received a copy of "The History of The Old Colony Club House" which throws me into a dilemma which I am going to let you settle.

Having spent many years on researching the titles of the lands from Court St. to the harbor's edge, and from First Brook (About the north boundary of the Memorial Building Parking Lot) to the north end of the lots facing North St., as well as several of the lots that face North St., I am utterly confused by the "History" as presented by Frank N. Houghton.

The only way I can make his claim of title and mine mesh together is to assume he thought the Josiah Cotton house (formerly a barn) and the Old Colony Club were one and the same building. THEY WERE NOT. See Davis's Ancient Land Marks, First Edition, Page 230 bottom third of the page.

The Cotton House, so called, stood between the Old Colony and the Methodist Episcopal Church (now the Synagog), right where the head of Brewster St. now is, and looked directly across Court St. to the little firehouse (now gone) and the 1820 Court House with its iron fence. In back of it, to the east, was the Capt. Cowen Line Works (small diameter rope works, which ran from the rear of one of the North St. lots all the way to Howland St., to a point where the gas works used to be. This Line Works burned flat Aug. 7, 1859.

In 1881, Apr 4 Water St. was extended northerly from North St. On Apr 3 1882 Winslow St. was extended to Water St. and on Dec. 1 1884 Brewster St. was laid out to run from Court St., easterly through the Cotton lot, continuing through the Line Works lot, then through the Jackson meadow lands and the Jackson flake yards to the present junction with Water & Winslow Sts.

Of course to do this the Cotton House would have to be moved or destroyed. It was moved to 24 Brewster St. (north side facing the Thomas Jackson or Harriet Jackson house. In 1940 it was owned by Mr. Toupin but when Mr. Toupin died it passed to Mr. Stasinos and was still standing there in 1950. Somewhere in the 1960's or early 1970's Mr. Stasinos took the house down and turned the lot and all that is left of the Cotton house is a few of the heavier beams lying (at least until recently) on the ground to mark the easterly boundary of the lot. The Old Colony Club still stands where it has

already stood. This should suffice to prove that the Cotton house, which my father John Russell often pointed out to me as his boyhood home, was not the Old Colony Club building, and Mr. Houghton does not say it was. He only says that John J. Russell sold the Old Colony Club to Georgianna Hedge in 1871, but not that he ever lived there. John J. Russell sold the Cotton House to Georgianna Hedge.

Wm T. Davis in his Ancient Land Marks, first ed. pp 230-231 does not mention Georgianna Hedge as ever being an owner of the Old Colony Club, nor for that matter does he mention William S. Robbins, but he does state (p 230) that John J. Russell sold the Cotton House to Georgianna Hedge, 1871 who sold it to William S. Robbins in 1878.

It may be that the lot occupied by the Cotton House included the lawn between the Old Colony Club and the present Brewster St., and that Wm S. Robins [sic] bought that lawn while Georgianna Hedge bought only the Cotton House, or that Georgianna bought the whole lot in 1871 and sold only the house to Robbins in 1878. This is one of the very few records I do not have.

In any event I doubt I doubt [sic] that Helen, (Davis) Whitman ever acquired the Old Colony Club House from John J. Russell, directly or indirectly, from John J. Russell for the following reasons.

This Helen was the sister of John J. Russell. She married first Col. Wm Davis (1850) who had already come into possession of the club house, inheriting it from his father (1826) but not coming into his hands till the death of his mother April 1 1847, which as you can see was three years before the wedding (1850) and thirteen years before John J. Russell bought the Cotton House, 1860.



Col Wm Davis and his wife, the former Miss Helen Russell had a daughter "Harriet" 1851, and a son William (Dr. Bill) in 1853 and then Col. Wm died. I knew Dr. Bill quite well and he told me he was born in the Old Colony Club House. That I should know a man born 116 years ago may seem strange but when my family moved back to the old family homestead in 1940 he came to visit me (while at his summer home in Orleans, Mass (Winter home St. Paul Minn.) and I have a letter from him dated April 6 1940 containing much information about his youth and his memories of this house when he lived here 1860-1870 as "man of the house" for his widowed grandmother Deborah Spooner Russell, sister of Bourne Spooner.

Capt John Russell, father of John J. Russell, with the assistance of Deborah Spooner, his wife, had four children.

|                      |         |                  |      |
|----------------------|---------|------------------|------|
| Mary Spooner Russell | 1821 m. | James T. Hedge,  | 1846 |
| John Jackson Russell | 1823 m. | Mary A. Danforth | 1855 |
| Helen Russell        | 1825 m. | 1 Col. Wm. Davis | 1850 |

|               |      |               |
|---------------|------|---------------|
| Laura Russell | 1827 | never married |
|---------------|------|---------------|

Capt. John died Feb. 6 1857, leaving only wife Deborah and the unmarried daughter, Laura at 26 North St.

John J. Russell and wife Mary Danforth  
had

|            |                     |
|------------|---------------------|
| Helen 1857 | never married       |
| John 1860  | m. Caroline Coombs  |
| Lydia 1863 | m. Charles S. Davis |

William H. Whitman m. 1st Ann Sever  
Thomas and they had

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Isabella Thomas Whitman | 1848 (Belle)  |
| Elizabeth Whitman       | 1850 (Lizzie) |
| William Thomas Whitman  | 1853          |

and when Mrs Wm H. Whitman died he married Helen (Russell) Davis, and they had

Russell Whitman 1861  
Ann Thomas Whitman 1862 (Nan)  
Winslow Whitman 1866

The Whitman family lived in a house on the west side of Court St., just north of the Buttner's store which was still standing until that row of stores was built extending from Buttner's Store to South

Russell St., until widower Wm. H Whitman m. widow Helen (Russell) Davis and then they all moved over to the Old Colony Club.

The significant dates are as follows:

Capt John Russell died Feb 6 1857 leaving Deborah and MISS Laura at 26 North with John J., his recently married bride (1855) and their daughter Helen expected in Sept. John J. was the "man of the house.

In the meantime John J.'s sister Helen had married Col. Wm Davis and had Harriet 1851 and Dr. Bill 1853 and was about to marry Wm. H. Whitman but the question was what to do about Dr. Bill. It was arranged that John J. would buy a home of his own (the Cotton house 1860) and Dr. Bill would be loaned to his grandmother, Deborah Spooner Russell, to take over the job of "man of the house" from the departing John J., and this should explain why Dr. Bill was at North St from 1860 to 1871 when Deborah died, John J. Russell sold the Cotton house to Georgianna Hedge and moved back to the family homestead at 26 North.

Now John Russell, son of John J. Russell (both formerly Presidents of the Old Colony Club) was born 1860, the year his father (John J.) bought the Cotton House and Russell Whitman, his first cousin, son of Helen Russell Davis Whitman was born 1861 in the house next door, viz. the Old Colony Club. They were very close as to age and extremely good friends and it would be difficult for a stranger to figure out which boy lived in which house or whether they both lived in the same house. They played together, hunted together, walked to and from school together and when John J and his family moved to 26 North with his family (1871) both the boys could usually be found together, day or night, at 25 Court or 26 North.

Now the point to all this is that I knew Russell Whitman well. He also visited us in 1940 when he knew we in our turn had acquired the family homestead (first owned by my ancestors in 1705) and I have in my hand a letter from him dated April 4 1940 detailing his memories of 26 North during the years he was here as much as there.

Of the people I have mentioned I have known

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Helen Russell       | 1857 |
| John Russell        | 1860 |
| Lydia Russell       | 1863 |
| Isabella T. Whitman | 1848 |
| Elizabeth Whitman   | 1850 |
| Wm. T. Whitman      | 1853 |
| Russell Whitman     | 1861 |
| Anna T. Whitman     | 1862 |
| Winslow Whitman     | 1863 |

and Dr. Bill Davis : 1853

All of them knew the story of the Cotton House and all of them knew Deborah Spooner Russell who first came to 26 North in 1816 and was grandmother or great grandmother to all of those listed.

My problem is this. Capt John Russell and his wife Deborah Spooner had a daughter Laura, who was never married, but lived in the house with Capt. John Russell - then with John J. Russell and then moved in 1898 when John Russell acquired the property and moved his wife and four children (of which I was the youngest, being born 1897 (the year John J died). She moved to #2 Court Sr. Apr 3 1904.

She was the authoress of "Laura Russell Remembers" which can be bought at the Pilgrim Hall for, I think, \$2.50. Pilgrim Hall was about to mount an exhibit of Laura Russell things when they called me to ask if I had any artifacts of hers they might borrow. It happened that about two weeks before I had discovered among my files her very curious will, directions to her executor (my father) receipts, insurance policies, stock certificates and other items

and from her will a list of whom she hoped would get what. Some of her heirs died before she did and the items that were to go to them if they survived her simply stayed here and I was able to locate a few of them. That exhibit is now being mounted and I feel I will certainly be asked questions and my answers will not jibe with Mr. Houghton's history.

I would not want that to happen, but what can I do about it? One more page

Mr. Houghton ends his history with the beginning. That is he starts his story at 1893 and ends it at 1786.

I agree that in 1786 there was a barn standing on the east side of Court St., but it was not the nucleus of the Old Colony Club but of the Cotton House. Joanna White was not left this barn by her husband Gideon White nor by her father Thomas Howland Sr., husband of Joanna (Cole) Howland died Dec. 2 1739. He left a will which gave which gave his son Joseph one half of a lot 55 by 90 feet, with a barn on it, the other half going to his son Thomas Jr. This will and the inventory of his estate appear in "Mayflower Descendants," Vol. 27, pages 82 - 86 (at Myflower House Library or the Public Library and probably Pilgrim Hall).

How did Thomas Howland Sr. obtain the property. Wm T. Davis opines that Gov. Bradford left it to his stepson (not son in law) Thomas Southworth who m. Elizabeth Reyner and left it to his only child Elizabeth Southworth, who married Joseph Howland who left it to Thomas Howland Sr. It isn't so. See the printed Town Records Vol II, Page 9 where the entire 20 acres from Court St., to the harbor and from the Bowling Alley to my back fence was granted to Thomas Howland on Feb. 15, 1707.

Wm. T. Davis born 1822, still living 1906  
was witness to these comings and goings.  
Respectfully

Allen D. Russell"

## LANDMARK GONE.

### Burning of the Unitarian Church, Plymouth.

### Paul Revere's Bell Sinks Into Glowing Embers.

### Portraits of the Pastors Also Destroyed.

### Narrow Escape of the Ancient Pilgrim Town.

### Firemen's Sturdy Efforts Alone Saved Many Structures.

Plymouth, Nov. 22.—The most disastrous conflagration which has visited Plymouth in many years occurred this evening and resulted in the destruction of the fine church building occupied by the Unitarian Society, and damage to several other structures.

The alarm was rung in from box 54, at 8:15 o'clock.

Steamer 2 responded promptly, and in a few minutes a second alarm called steamer 1 to the scene.

At that time the whole interior of the church was ablaze, and the impossibility of saving the edifice was apparent to everyone. Every effort was then directed to saving the surrounding buildings, and the entire department was called out.

The church was situated in Town sq., in the most densely populated part of the village and at the foot of Burial Hill, the last resting place of many of the Pilgrim fathers.

Just across the square stands the church of the Pilgrimage occupied by the Congregation-

alists, and on the opposite side is the old Town House.

It was at first thought that both of these would succumb to the flames, but only the latter was seriously threatened, the sparks flying to the eastward.

The Town House was on fire several times, but was saved by the efforts of the firemen.

This building was the old colonial court house, erected in 1749.

About 150 yards from the church, in the direction in which the burning brands were blown, the huge building erected for a skating rink and now occupied by the Standish Guards, Company D, 5th Regiment, looms on the banks of historic Town Brook.

This proved an attraction for the sparks, and the roof was soon ablaze in several places.

The State property was removed an armed guard placed in charge of it.

Lyceum Hall building, which contains the custom house, was at one time on fire, as was the Baptist church, a few yards away on Triden [sic.] st.

Down by the shore stands a nest of ancient structures, which offered a good mark for destruction, as they were in direct line, if the flames were not confined to the place where they originated.

The five small buildings of Simmons Brothers were afire at one time, but were saved by buckets of water, the fire department being fully occupied in the square.

Samuel Bradford's cooper shop had its roof burned through.

Among the other buildings which suffered slightly were the house of Mrs. Z. Onley, the wheelwright shop of Melzar Sampson, the office of Jason W. Mixter [OCC member], the market and dwelling of Charles T. Holmes, and the stable of Fred L. Churchill.

Every building within a quarter of a mile of the fire had men on the roofs busily at work with bucket and hose.

Had there been a fresh wind blowing it would have swept the entire southeasterly part of the village from Spring Hill to the Harbor-side.

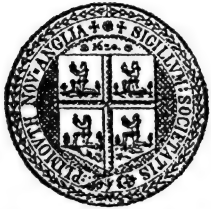
It was an hour and a half before the tower of the church fell into the mass of glowing embers, and the conflagration was regarded as fairly under control.

The firemen worked like beavers and it is owing to their sturdy efforts that the destruction was no greater.

The scene was grand and terrible and hundreds filled Town sq. and the adjoining streets,







# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, March, 1995. Ser. 1, No.15

1

## NEWS AND NOTES

1995 brings the 375th anniversary of the Pilgrims' landing in Plymouth and the founding of the Old Colony. The Town has planned a series of celebratory events and entertainments to properly honor the Plymouth Colonists and the Wampanoag People whose gracious hospitality made the subsequent history of the Town possible. The Club has always shared in the Town's major celebrations of the Pilgrims, ever since it initiated the first such event in 1769. In 1995 we will observe the anniversary by sponsoring a series of musical events to occur each Friday in August, following the Pilgrim Progress in which the Pilgrim Bell Ringers will perform for the public on the Clubhouse porch.

It is a suitable occasion to take a look back at earlier anniversaries to see how our predecessors celebrated the Pilgrim Story. This issue of the Quarterly is therefore largely dedicated to the history of the Town of Plymouth's commemorative events over the past two centuries. First, however, we wish to present, for the record, the **Conversion of the Billiard Table**, as related by Grey Perry.

### Conversion of the Billiard Table

I thought I would summarize the process of the conversion of the billiard table for the Club records. This is in addition to what I posted for the general membership in the form of an announcement (to follow).

Early in 1994, the Long Range Planning Committee determined that no one was using the billiard table, or billiard room, for that matter. We wanted to make better use of that unused asset of the Club. We also felt a pool table would be much more used, might cause some members to come early on Friday nights, and maybe even stay later after dinner. We wanted to make the change so that the Club had more to offer its members, present and future. The Executive Committee and the general membership agreed when it voted to proceed on this project.

In the summer of '94, a yard sale was held, the proceeds of which were to be applied to the cost of conversion. \$655 was raised toward the total cost \$1235 to of the job. A general appeal will be made to make up the difference to pay for this, so that no funds from the Club treasury will be required.

In the process of investigating the alternatives to do this, we discovered that few people in this country play billiards any more. Billiards is a popular table game in some Latin and Far Eastern countries, but in the United States, billiards has fallen out of favor. As a result, the market value of the Club's table was only about \$300 on a trade-in toward a used table of comparable age and construction. New pool tables of comparable construction cost in excess of \$3000, up to \$6000. Eight foot tables using thinner slate or honeycomb beds are less expensive and are not considered suitable for club use.

Some research revealed that our table was manufactured by the J.E. Cane Company of Boston, probably around 1900-1910. That company is no longer in business. Most likely the Club bought it second-hand when accord to the records, a new table was acquired in December, 1930. Maybe they put a new cover on it a year or two later. When the table was dismantled prior to conversion, some shimming cards and newspaper clippings were found under the 1" slate beds and the clippings were dated October 1934.

A few details of the conversion may be of interest. The man who did the work, Mr. Ed Marrier of Abington, MA, is one of the very few craftsmen who do conversions. The table must be dismantled, a process that involves removing side panels, cushion supports, and of course, the three 1" slate beds attached to wood frames. The remainder of the table is massive construction of poplar and clear pine. The side panels are of walnut and oak. The overall dimensions of the table are 60" x 110", or what is known as a nine foot table. The three slate sections are 35" x 53" x 1", and with the wood undersupports weigh approximately 240 pounds each. They don't build them like this anymore!

The job does not allow for a single error. The pockets in the slate must be carefully cut with a diamond saw, a wooden insert placed in the cut and carved into the proper shape, the side rails cut to accommodate the pockets, and also cut down to allow for the pool ball diameter, which is a slightly smaller diameter than billiard balls. and drilled out to accept the leather pocket supports.

The table is then reassembled. The slates are replaced, leveled and shimmed as needed, and are puttied at the seams, sanded and cleaned thoroughly. The new felt cover, which has a composite backing is stretched over the table, and stapled to the wood undersupports. The

cushion rails and pockets are assembled, and bolted into place with some very hefty hardware, and the side trim rails are screwed on the job is finished. There was considerable anxiety from myself and Mr. Marrier's crew because Ed has had a quadruple bypass operation, and he insisted on carrying the slate beds with little assistance and made many loud noises of exertion as he did this, especially going up the stairs.

Mr. Marrier indicated he has not seen many billiard tables of this vintage in the past 25 years. That may have been when pocket billiards became popular and many conversions were made at that time. Since then, billiards has declined in popularity and billiard tables have fallen into disuse and disrepair. He felt our table was clearly worth converting and was satisfied with the finished product. He estimated its present value at over \$2500.

A new overhead lamp was also installed to replace the existing fluorescent light. The cues will need repairs and that will complete the job. We may want to preserve the old billiard balls in our display case. We have the original boxes the balls came in as well. There are two or three sets of balls that may have historical value to the Club; they have some value to collectors, about \$50 each.

.....  
To: Old Colony Members

From: Grey Perry, Chairman

Long Range Planning Committee

Date: December 2, 1994

Subj: Billiard Table Renovation/Conversion

Conversion of our J.E. Came, Boston, MA, antique billiard table is complete. We had investigated trading that table in for another, used table, and conversion of our own table was the least expensive alternative. And while such a conversion allows no margin for error, there was none, and the result is very attractive. We now have a table that our membership will certainly use more than they used the table when it was a billiard table, and the attractiveness of the Old Colony Club to present and future members has been enhanced.

The money we raised during the Yard Sale in July was about half the cost to make the conversion. There is a shortfall of \$580. We hope to have a general solicitation of the membership to make up the difference so that this project will be fully paid for by the entire membership. Any surplus from that solicitation will go into general operating funds at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

We hope you will go upstairs to see the finished product, and maybe shoot a few games of pocket billiards.

### Celebrating the Pilgrims 1769 – 1970

In January, 1769, Isaac Lothrop, Pelham Winslow, Thomas Lothrop, Elkanah Cushman, John Thomas, Edward Winslow, Jr. and John Watson, founded the Old Colony Club to avoid "...the many disadvantages and inconveniences that arise from intermixing with the company at the taverns in this town of Plymouth...", and to honor their forefathers with an annual celebration of their arrival here in Plymouth. They chose to hold their annual meeting on the anniversary of the December 11, 1620, Landing on Plymouth Rock. This celebration, originally referred to as "Old Colony Day" and later as "Forefathers' Day," was first observed on December 22, 1769.

"On the morning of the said day (Dec. 22, 1769), after discharging a cannon, was hoisted upon the hall [Old Colony Hall, which once stood on Market Street south of the 1749 Court House, was built by Club member John Thomas, and was the place of meeting for the Club] an elegant silk flag, with the following inscription, 'OLD COLONY, 1620'. At eleven o'clock, A. M. the members of the club appeared at the hall, and from thence proceeded to the house of Mr. Howland, inn-holder, which is erected on the spot where the first licensed house in the Old Colony formerly stood [now the site of Fleet Bank on North Street], at half after two a decent repast was served, which consisted of the following dishes, viz.

- 1, a large baked Indian whortleberry pudding;
- 2, a dish of sauquetash;
- 3, a dish of clams;
- 4, a dish of oysters and a dish of codfish;
- 5, a haunch of venison, roasted by the first Jack brought to the colony;
- 6, a dish of sea-fowl;
- 7, a dish of frost fish and eels;
- 8, an apple pie;
- 9, a course of cranberry tarts, and cheese made in the Old Colony."

The food selected was selected for its traditional nature and "...dressed in the plainest manner (all appearance of luxury and extravagance being avoided, in imitation of our ancestors, whose memory we shall ever respect.)" The Club president (Isaac Lothrop) sat in a chair that had belonged to Governor William Bradford, and called for a dozen toasts to honor the memory of their ancestors, and to give assent to the need for liberty and prosperity. Among these were toasts to *John Carver* and the other governors; *Nathaniel Morton*, Secretary of Plymouth Colony (and, until his uncle William Bradford's manuscript 'Of Plymouth Plantation' was rediscovered in 1853, the author of the earliest available history of the



colony); *Myles Standish*; *Massasoit*; *Deacon Robert Cushman*; the union of the Old Colony and Massachusetts; the sentiment (in the shadow of the American Revolution) against arbitrary power; the downfall of those opposing civil and religious liberty; the deliverance of the colonies from oppression; a lasting union with Britain and prosperity to all the colonies. After the toasts, the evening was spent "recapitulating and conversing upon the many and various advantages of our forefathers in the first settlement of this country, and the growth and increase of the same, — at eleven o'clock in the evening a cannon was again fired, three cheers given, and the club and company withdrew." This is the first recorded celebration of the original Pilgrim holiday, which soon became known as "Forefathers' Day". By creating a specific anniversary for the landing of the shallop at Plymouth Rock (not the *Mayflower*, which only arrived in Plymouth harbor on December 16), they defined it as the pivotal event in the Forefathers' story, and provided a focus for much of the Pilgrim symbolism that was to follow.

In 1770, the Club celebrated Forefathers Day on Monday, December 24, in order to avoid the eve and the day of the Sabbath. Youths paraded the streets of the town at daybreak firing a cannon and small arms. The club members assembled at ten A.M. and were joined at their invitation by many of the leading citizens. Once again there was an entertainment at which "the history of emigrant colonies and the constitution and declension of empires, ancient and modern" was discussed over a meal "foreign from all kinds of luxury, and consisting of fish, flesh, and vegetables, the natural produce of this colony." The company marched to Old Colony Hall accompanied by the local militia, where they were met by a well-disciplined group of schoolboys and their master, and Rev. Chandler Robbins of the First Church. A speech was given by Edward Winslow, Jr., who recited the usual remembrance of the Forefathers and closed with "...if we, their sons, act from the same principles, and conduct with the same noble firmness and resolution, when our holy religion or our civil liberties are invaded, we may expect a reward proportionate..."

Similar celebrations occurred in 1771 and 1772. However, in 1773, the revolutionary Plymouth Committee of Correspondence met with the Old Colony Club—there was some overlap in membership—and rather presumptuously informed the Club that they were determined to recognize Forefathers Day in their own way, and requested that the club "join with and conform thereto" their plans. Not surprisingly, the Club resented this unsolicited invasion of their territory and disruption of existing plans. They voiced a suspicion that the Committee's members had no more right to interfere in such matters than it would in "regulating or altering their creed, or their catechism" and that "This partial and extra-judicial way of proceeding, we appre-

hend, will have a tendency to promote parties and divisions (which have already too long harassed this once peaceful town)." The Club voted to observe the holiday privately, which they did, and then disbanded. It was the Town of Plymouth which carried on the Forefathers' Day tradition in 1774, and for many years thereafter, until the Pilgrim Society was founded and took over the duty of organizing celebrations in honor of the Pilgrims.

Later Forefathers' Day dinners were marked by sermons, orations and poetry in honor of the first Plymouth Colonists. The most famous of the early addresses was given by Daniel Webster, then a rising young lawyer in Congress, at the Plymouth bicentennial celebration in 1820. His oration is pervaded by the optimism of the early nineteenth century. As he looked back to the American successes leading up to the Revolution and the greater ones that had occurred in the subsequent thirty years, Webster was struck by the positive character of what had become of the nation he saw as beginning with the Landing of The Pilgrims. He evoked a sense of great promise for the United States which he felt had been built on firm foundations from the past. This secure beginning made it possible to look forward confidently to when "Erelong the sons of the Pilgrims will be on the shores of the Pacific".<sup>1</sup> The address is more of a summing up of the United States as it was in 1820 than it is about the Pilgrims, but Webster declared that it was their achievements that led to the development religious liberty, free education, representative government and sundry other national blessings. "Who would wish, that his country's existence had otherwise begun?"<sup>2</sup> Webster asks, than with the Pilgrims in New England. The only cloud Webster could perceive in the bright future is the problem of slavery, which he severely condemns. This early stand against slavery was to come back to haunt him when, in his later efforts to preserve the Union, his followers wanted him to be as uncompromising as he had been in 1820. Webster's Pilgrims are still regional, but their national importance is implicit, and it was his often reprinted oration that most fully realized their future celebration.

A series of impressive commemorative celebrations honoring the Pilgrims began in 1853. Earlier events, such as the ceremonial relocation of the Rock and the 1820 bicentennial observation had been focused locally and were largely limited to Massachusetts residents. After 1820, the sponsorship of celebrations of Forefathers' Day had been shared by the Pilgrim Society and the local churches, and in some years there were no observances at all beyond an annual ball. These omissions eventually caused some comment, especially in 1852. In

1 Webster, Daniel. *Discourse*, 1821, p. 61

2 *Ibid.*, p. 42

that year, the day was marked in Plymouth by an anti-slavery meeting attended by William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and others, and two rival anniversary balls, but nothing was done by the Pilgrim Society. In fact, the Society, "...which voted to celebrate the Landing annually, refused to celebrate the day themselves and were indisposed to allow the building under their charge, which was erected expressly for the purpose, among others, of furnishing accommodations for such celebrations, to be used on this occasion." This resulted in a sarcastic toast at one of the balls: "Pilgrim Hall—Erected to the memory of the Pilgrims; but now a silent monument to the Pilgrim Society."<sup>3</sup> *The Old Colony Memorial*, published on Jan. 18, 1853, the 1836 constitution of the Society which specified the purposes noted above. Perhaps stung by these accusations, the annual meeting on May 30 of the Pilgrim Society was an unusually large one. Measures were taken at that time to plan a grand summer celebration of the Pilgrims' July 1620 departure or Embarkation from Delftshaven in Holland, on August 1, 1853.

An aim expressed at the formation of the Pilgrim Society had been the erection of a monument to the Pilgrims. In 1849, this topic was raised again, but nothing was done until 1853 when it was decided to use the August celebration "...for the purpose of creating public interest in the monument enterprise."<sup>4</sup> It was hoped that this celebration, the first one to aim at a national appeal, would finally make possible the construction of the monument. The extensive invitation list included not only Massachusetts and New England dignitaries, but President Pierce and his predecessor, Millard Fillmore; Senators Crittenden of Kentucky and Seward of New York; representatives from the Plymouth Church (Southwark, Surrey) and Southampton, England; from Delftshaven and Leyden; and the presidents of the various New England Societies across the country. Admittedly, most of these dignitaries did not accept, but the concept of a broad national, indeed international, interest was introduced.

The whole town was decorated with banners, bunting, evergreen boughs, and appropriate mottos; from "Times ain't now what they used to was" (Capt. Turner), "August 1—Forefathers' Day thawed out" (Wm. Barnes), "The Moral Electricity of the Pilgrims: May the Matrons of the Earth take a shock from the Leyden jar." (Mrs. Barnes); to more restrained sentiments such as "Ever green in our Memory" (William S. Russell) and "PILGRIM HALL: While on the waste of ocean, One hoary rock shall stand, Be this its latest legend, Here

was the Pilgrim's land." (The Pilgrim Society).<sup>5</sup> In memory of the bicentennial in 1820, several businesses, including Ballard's Saloon and the Plymouth Bank, displayed busts of Daniel Webster. An impressive parade wound through the decorated streets of Plymouth to a tented pavilion on the Town Green, where a meal was prepared for twenty-five hundred guests. There a number of flowery speeches extoling the Pilgrims, their religious and moral inspiration, and the successful progress of the nation they had initiated. Edward Everett, who had been the Forefathers' Day speaker in 1824, noted with some sympathy, but without regret, the effect of all of this had had on the original local inhabitants, the Indians. The surviving Indians he declared were "feeble and stricken relics of once powerful and formidable tribes of fellow-men".<sup>6</sup> Despite the declaration by Gov. Clifford that in this case it was "Work, work, work—Pray, pray, pray" rather than the "foredoomed and predestined tramping, ...March, march, march!"<sup>7</sup> brutality of Manifest Destiny at work, there is no real doubt that the Pilgrim Story was subsumed in the idea of the providential defeat of the "savage races" which would inevitably bring "civilization" to the American continent. There was appreciation for the place of the Dutch in the Pilgrim Story, and Rev. Samuel Osgood of New York declared that "Together, the sons of the Netherlands, New England and Virginia have built up the power of New York...".<sup>8</sup>

The concerns of the time were particularly evident in the address by Richard Yeadon of South Carolina, which praised Clay, Calhoun and Webster for their support of the Union against the pressures of abolitionists and such divisive elements. The shadow of the coming struggle was present, and Webster's 1820 position put aside for his later more pragmatic one, as the Pilgrims were evoked as a unifying national image. The company drank a number of toasts, consumed their dinner, and enjoyed a band concert and fireworks to conclude the evening. The oratory, while satisfactorily orotund for the time, was not memorable, (neither was the dinner, according to *The Christian Register*) but it adequately represented the strong impression the idea of the Pilgrims made on the people of the United States in 1853 as a symbol of cooperative unity. The *New York Evening Mirror* (August 3, 1853) noted that "The Old Colony holiday is the theme of all of the newspapers", and that "...the material object of this Celebration was to raise funds for the purpose of erecting a monument

3 *Old Colony Memorial*, Dec. 25, 1852.

4 *Monument Celebration*, 1889, p. 10

5 *An Account of the Pilgrim Celebration at Plymouth, August 1, 1853*. Boston: Crosby, Nichols and Co., 1853. pp. 10-22.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 49.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 125.



upon the 'Rock of Plymouth', and that already the response to the call has been prompt and generous."<sup>9</sup>

The interest in the Pilgrims and their town was further shown by the publication in 1853 of W. H. Bartlett's *The Pilgrim Fathers of New England* and Calvin Philleo's article, "A Pilgrimage To Plymouth" in *Harper's Monthly*, (Dec. 1853). Bartlett was an English artist and writer who used the information published by Young, Russell, Hunter,<sup>10</sup> and others in a popular history of the Pilgrims with an illustrated tour of the sites connected with them in England, Holland, and New England. He provided a number of romantic engravings of Plymouth scenes and described the town as quaint and old fashioned: "In these 'go-a-head' times when the United States are so rapidly filling up,...this poor little town of Plymouth is looked down upon as quite an old place, very much behind the stirring spirit of the age."<sup>11</sup> Tourists, as is true today, gravitated to the Rock, and Bartlett's experience pointed up the need for a monument: "Most travellers, when conducted to the spot where the Rock stands, or rather stood, rub their eyes and wonder what can have become of it. They find, perhaps, without being aware, that they are at that moment standing upon it, and that were it not pointed out and the dust rubbed off, they would never have distinguished its surface from the rest of the quay in which it is embedded."<sup>12</sup>

Philleo observed that, although the fame of the Pilgrims and their settlement was common knowledge, scarcely anyone outside of the area could answer any questions about the old fashioned town itself. He arrived, as Bartlett did, by rail, and proceeded to relate a picturesque account of Plymouth and its environs. It was the fame of the Pilgrims that inspired him, while the town is described as a "...village of old-fashioned square-roofed houses, built upon the hillsides and in the valleys in between, of queer-looking stores and warehouses, and ropewalks huddled together at the water's edge, with the long ruinous-looking wharf, built on piles, projecting into the harbor in front, with the square gray turret, and two or three steeples and cupolas just visible above the...shingle roofs, ...Plymouth—the Old Colony, the home of the Pilgrims..."<sup>13</sup>, as if it was something out of the imagination of H. P. Lovecraft. The *Harper's* article was probably written in response to the

August 1 celebration in that year, which was the most elaborate recognition of the Pilgrims since 1820.

This climate of opinion made the time ripe for the creation of the memorial. A competition with a prize of \$300 was held to solicit designs for the proposed monument, but the actual contract was awarded to Boston architect Hammett Billings in 1854 for a grand design which included both a monumental canopy over the segment of the Rock remaining at the waterfront and erection of allegorical statuary at another site a mile and a half away. The latter, "The National Monument to the Forefathers", was "...intended to be the grandest work of its kind in the world...only equaled by the vast monuments of Egyptian power and grandeur...It is to be built of massive blocks of granite, and will be eighty feet at the base, and a little over one hundred and fifty feet in height...a figure of Faith...is to be of granite, and will be seventy feet high... Within the monument will be a chamber twenty-six feet in diameter, with a stone stair leading up to a platform, upon which stands the principle figure."<sup>14</sup> The 1850's reacted to the radicalism and economic turmoil of the previous decade as well as a strong revival movement, and the piety of the Pilgrims was particularly attractive. The plan was estimated to require \$325,000, and Mr. Billings was authorized to solicit and receive subscriptions in the name of the Pilgrim Society at \$120 a share or a fraction thereof. Enough money was raised by 1859 to begin construction.

The laying of the cornerstones of both the Plymouth Rock canopy and the Forefathers' Monument was planned for August 2, 1859. An extra day was added to the Departure anniversary because the first of the month fell on a Monday, which would necessitate work and travel on the Sabbath. "The committee decided on the following plan for the celebration: The laying of the cornerstone of the canopy by the Masonic order; a procession; the laying of the cornerstone of the National Monument with Masonic ceremonies; a dinner provided by J.B. Smith of Boston in a tent, capable of holding twenty-five hundred persons,...fireworks and a ball in the evening in Davis Hall."<sup>15</sup> The parade included over thirty groups of militia units, bands, Masonic and Templar lodges, historical societies, fire departments, and "...six groups on flats representing the Landing, Indians, advance of civilization, the thirty-three states, different nations, and the marine interests of Plymouth."<sup>16</sup> The canopy was finished in 1867, and contained not only the lower portion of the Rock, but a number of bones found on Cole's Hill when a sewer was being laid in 1854. These were identified by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes as the remains of white persons, and presumed to be those Pilgrims who had died the

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>10</sup> Young, Alexander. *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers* (1844), Russell, William S. *Guide to Plymouth and Recollections of the Pilgrims* (1846) and Hunter, Joseph. *Collections Concerning the Early History of the Founders of New Plymouth* (1849),

<sup>11</sup> Bartlett, W.H. *The Pilgrim Fathers of New England* 1853, p.164

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p.169

<sup>13</sup> Philleo, Calvin "A Pilgrimage To Plymouth", *Harper's Monthly*, Dec. 1853, p.39

<sup>14</sup> Russell, *Pilgrim Memorials*, 1855, p.195

<sup>15</sup> Davis, *Memoirs*, p. 372

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* p.373.

First Winter and buried, according to a tradition preserved by Elder Faunce, in secret near the first Common house on Leyden Street. After the completion of the canopy, the Pilgrim Society purchased a number of houses (characterized by a reporter as "...unsightly buildings that encumber this space...") on Cole's Hill overlooking the Rock, which were torn down to provide a suitable backdrop to the structure. The upper part of the Plymouth Rock was eventually removed from in front of Pilgrim Hall and reunited with its lower half in the canopy in 1880.

In 1870, the 250th anniversary of the Pilgrims was held on December 21, the Pilgrim Society' newly-determined date for Forefathers' Day. Once again dignitaries from all over were invited, and the published account of the festivities included a 23 page appendix of regrets in reply to the invitations. There was a special train from Boston for the out-of-town guests and reporters, who then joined a parade down Court, North, Water and Leyden Sts. to the First Parish Church. This was led by the Standish Guards and the Plymouth Brass Band, and brought up by Gilmore's Band from Boston, who also played at the evening ball. As the procession passed the Rock, a salute was fired from the U.S. Revenue steamer *Mahoning*.

The services in the church featured an oration by Robert C. Winthrop of Boston, which lauded and recapitulated the Pilgrim experience, and made some very intelligent comments on the scholarship that had grown up about the Pilgrims, and their place in the American story, giving due to Virginia's prior claims as well as the development of New England, and the birth of the United States. There followed a dinner for the assembly, which included other speeches by the President of the Pilgrim Society, Mr. Tobey; General Howard, the hero of Gettysburg; the President of Harvard, Mr. Clifford; the Mayor of Boston, Mr. Shurtleff (who was the editor of the published Records of Plymouth Colony); and a toast sent in from President Grant, among others. The festivities finished with a ball in Davis Hall (where the Plymouth Children's Museum is now) which was brightly lit with gas lights and decorated with portraits from Pilgrim Hall and other collections and baskets of flowers.

Despite the enthusiasm, the plan for the National Monument to the Forefathers' was found to be too ambitious for the funds that could be raised. In 1874, Billings, with the approval of the Pilgrim Society, reduced the scale of the monument by slightly more than half. The idea of an internal area was dropped, and the overall height set at eighty-one feet. Hammett Billings unfortunately died in 1874, and was succeeded by his brother, Joseph. In 1880, Joseph E. Billings and Rev. Willard M. Harding, who had been the agent and fund-

raiser for the project, both died and the project threatened to come to a halt. The Pilgrim Society voted to devote the admission fees to Pilgrim Hall to the project, and in 1886, the United States Congress passed an act to aid the Monument's completion. Further subscriptions were raised as well, so that by November, 1888, the Monument was finally completed and paid for.

The Pilgrim Society decided to have the formal dedication on the following August first anniversary in 1889. Accordingly, the Society and the town of Plymouth geared up for another impressive celebration attended by a great crowd of dignitaries. On August first, the Masonic lodges gave their ritual imprimatur to the completion of the monument. The subsequent dinner was the occasion of an impressive oration by the Hon. William C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. He recognized that the Pilgrims were not alone in their transplantation of such English precedents as the Compact: "Others - in one form or another - in different stages of purity and development brought the same truths to Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, Georgia, Pennsylvania and New York; and prior to their landing the forms of civil government had been established in Virginia."<sup>17</sup>

The 275th anniversary of the Landing in 1895 was marked by a special Forefathers' Day observation, with exercises (but no parade) held in the Standish Guards Armory and a dinner at the Samoset House. The address at the Armory was made by Senator George F. Hoar, who was the driving force behind the restoration of Bradford's manuscript history when it was returned by the British government to the State of Massachusetts in May, 1897. The dinner was addressed by Arthur Lord, then President of the Pilgrim Society and others.

Another Plymouth celebration occurred in 1896 and '97. The First Parish Church (Unitarian) burned down on November 22, 1892. Because of the historical importance of the First Parish church, the project to replace the structure drew widespread support of many religious and patriotic societies throughout America, which donated the memorial stained glass windows and other elements of the construction. The cornerstone of the present church was laid on June 29, 1896, and the dedication took place on Forefathers' Day, 1899.

The Town of Plymouth gave its support by holding a fund raising "Historical Festival" in the summers of 1896 and 1897. This included an exhibit of Plymouth antiques (admission 15 cents) at the Winslow House on Winslow St., (now the Mayflower Society House) which was then owned by Miss Rose Briggs' father, George Russell Briggs, and a historical pageant written and directed by Margaret MacLaren Eager. It was one of the first of many such celebrations held throughout America in the

period, and which prefigured the more famous Pilgrim Tercentenary of 1921. The pageant was composed of a series of historical scenes illustrating the story of the Pilgrims and subsequent Plymouth history. These included "Boston, England," "Holland," "The Voyage of the Pilgrims," "Southampton, England," "The Signing of the Compact," "Indian Home Life," "The Treaty with Massasoit," "A Service in the Old Fort," "The Courtship of Myles Standish," "Wedding of Francis LeBaron," "Wedding of Gen. James Warren and Mercy Otis," "A Tea Party of 1760," "A Scene from the Revolution," and "The Flag Dance." The pageant ended with a children's performance, "The First Spring," in which Plymouth children portrayed both the younger Pilgrims, bees and all of the wild flowers of the local countryside, "The Indian Scene" and "The Dance of the Little Sailors."

The climax of the enthusiasm concerning the Pilgrims came in 1920 and 1921, with the Tercentenary Celebration. Preparations began with the appointment of a state Tercentenary Commission in 1916. The 1917 report of the Commission proposed a two-part event consisting of a grand pageant and the creation of a commemorative park in Plymouth, and a full-scale cultural exposition in Boston, on the lines of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and the expositions in St. Louis (commemorating the Louisiana Purchase, in 1904) and San Francisco (celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal, in 1915). The elaborate plans by Ralph Adams Cram for a \$11,000,000 International Exposition to be located on man-made islands in the Charles River Basin never came to anything, but the plans for Plymouth were eventually carried out, with modifications. It was proposed that the entire face of Coles Hill should be cleared of houses (as had been done to the northeast section following 1856) and a Memorial Hall erected above a new canopy over Plymouth Rock. All of the "unsightly wharves, coal sheds and other buildings"<sup>18</sup> on the old commercial waterfront were to be demolished. The houses on School St. and South Russell St. that backed onto Burial Hill were to be removed as well. Commemoration of the idealized past apparently was obscured by the actual past.

The Tercentenary Celebration was the grandest of the many celebrations that Plymouth has dedicated to the Pilgrims, and attracted the largest audience of all. The Tercentenary officially began on Dec. 21, 1920, which was declared "Pilgrims' Day" by President Wilson, to "...observe throughout the Union with special patriotic services, in order that great events in American history that have resulted from the landing of these hearty and courageous navigators and colonists may be accented to the present generation of American citizens." A celebra-

tion on Forefather's Day observed by the Massachusetts Tercentenary Commission which drew many visitors. The buildings were again decorated with flags and bunting in traditional fashion. Massachusetts Governor Calvin Coolidge, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and other notables came by train and gathered at the Old Colony Theater where a program was held that included a telephone call to Governor Stephens of California. The call was put through coincidentally just as Senator Lodge finished quoting the part of Webster's 1820 oration which read: "...the voice of acclamation and gratitude, commencing on the Rock of Plymouth, shall be transmitted through millions of sons of the Pilgrims, till it lose itself in the murmurs of the Pacific seas...", a coincidence that greatly impressed the audience. Two of the speeches recognized the changing conditions of Plymouth and the nation at large, being "The Immigrant's Share in Our Heritage - What Part May He Fairly Expect?" (Vittorio Orlandini of Boston) and "For The Rights Accorded the Immigrant, What May America Justly Expect of Him?" (Frank V. Thompson, Supt. of Schools, Boston). The primary address was given by Senator Lodge.

The Tercentenary at Plymouth was the ultimate celebration of the Pilgrim Story. It was both a commemoration of the first year of Plymouth Colony and a reenactment of the symbolically dramatic elements that had accrued to the bare facts of Pilgrim history. The central event was the "Pageant of the Pilgrim Spirit" by George P. Baker, which mobilized 1,300 participants and a 300-member chorus as well as an orchestra. It was enacted below Cole's Hill on a flat piece of ground where a number of wharves and buildings had been leveled in preparation for the event. Plymouth's commercial and marine past was thus cleared away to make room for the Pilgrim drama. Seats for 10,000 spectators were erected on Cole's Hill. The pageant was enacted a dozen times, beginning at 8:30 each night, on July 13 - 16, July 30 - Aug. 3, Aug. 10 - 13. The largest crowds came on Aug. 10, when over 15,000 people from all over the country poured into Plymouth to see the pageant. The action began when a disembodied "Voice of The Rock" (Rev. Ernest Pugh), intoned:

I the Rock of Plymouth, speak to you, Americans.  
Here I rested in the ooze  
From the ages primordial.  
Men came and went: Norsemen,  
Seamen of England, voyagers of France, Dutch  
Adventures;  
Over and around me  
The Indians walked, played, lived.  
I was a rock of millions along the shore,  
Waiting -- for what?

To me the Pilgrims come on me they stand,  
As one by one they land.  
Here they will work out their salvation.

<sup>18</sup> *Report of the Pilgrim Tercentenary Commission*. Boston: Wright & Potter for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1917. p. 5.



For this I have been waiting, waiting.  
Of me, the rock in the ooze, they have made a  
cornerstone of  
The Republic.

The first Episode showed the arrival of Norsemen (c.1000, A.D.), Martin Pring (1603), Champlain (1606), Admiral Blok (1614), John Smith (1614), Capt. Hunt (1615), (a musical interlude - to represent the Pestilence of 1618!) and Capt. Dermer (1619). The second Episode portrayed the events that led to the emigration from England, including a scene near Sturton-Le-Steeple in 1523 about Tyndale, the Martyrdom of the Separatists Barrow and Greenwood (1593), King James I passing through Scrooby in 1602 and receiving the Millenary petition, the Pilgrims' plans to emigrate (1608) and their attempt to embark near Grimsby the same year. The third Episode shows the Pilgrims in Holland, with a "March of the Dutch Cities", the decision to go to America, and the Departure of the "Speedwell" from Delftshaven. Episode Four displayed The Signing of the Compact, the First Washday at Cape Cod, The Treaty with Massasoit, The Return of The Mayflower, The Arrival of Later Colonists, and The Trial of Lyford and Oldham. The program finished with a Finale, including a poem by Robert Frost, The Voice from the Rock, glimpses of Washington and Lincoln, and a parade of "the States and Territories". Beside the active dramatics, there were pantomimes for each of the scenes in the first Episode. It was altogether an impressive affair, which had as its high point the visit of President Harding on "Plymouth Day" (Aug.1), and the Grand Parade which included a number of historical floats and marchers was considered "the finest in every way ever seen in this part of the world", which was undoubtedly true.

The Pageant was the high point of the Tercentenary celebrations, but there were also a number of dedications of more lasting monuments erected during this time. The most important were the construction of a new Canopy over Plymouth Rock, the gift of the Colonial Dames, and the dedication of Cyrus Dallin's statue to Massasoit on Cole's Hill, which was unveiled Sept. 5, 1921 by the Improved Order of Red Men and the Daughters of Pocahontas.<sup>19</sup> Other monuments included a Sarcophagus placed on Cole's Hill into which was placed a number of bones found there which were presumed to be those of the settlers who had died the First

Winter. These had been lodged in the old Billings canopy before the new structure was dedicated to them.

The Tercentenary was well received throughout middle class America, and Pilgrim-related orations and events were recommended for towns and schools throughout the country. The celebration of the Pilgrims reflected the search for traditional values that was part of the reaction to the end of the First World War. The Progressives' liberal causes and general optimism was carried on despite rumblings among radical intellectuals on one side and the gripes of conservatives who were appalled by the effects of modernism on American life. The majority of Americans felt that the war had "made the World safe for Democracy" i.e. Americanism - more or less, and wanted to get on with life. They rejected the radicalism of the pre-war era and while they might have doubts about the dramatic changes that urbanization and modernism were bringing, they were prepared to compromise the old small-town morality they were familiar with and accept the automobiles, electricity and material prosperity promised by the "New Freedom".

The last of the major celebrations before the present year was the 350th anniversary in 1970. Times had changed since the earlier celebrations, and the political atmosphere surrounding the 1970 observation was quite different from that which had made the earlier events widely popular national events. Contemporary radical protests and the receding hegemony of the old "Establishment" which occurred in the late 1960s were inauspicious for a simple patriotic celebration of the Pilgrims. The Plymouth leadership of the 350th Anniversary Committee changed three times before OCC Member John Talcott assumed the position of chairman, and even then there was some contention between his committee and other groups, especially the Plymouth-Provincetown Celebration Commission, established by the Federal government in October, 1970, and headed by OCC Member George C.P. Olsson, who was appointed in February, 1971.<sup>20</sup>

The celebrations extended for 15 months from September 12, 1970, to Thanksgiving Day, 1971. Similar observations were held in Provincetown, Plymouth, England, and Leiden, Holland. In Plymouth, a grand parade, fireworks and a ball were held on September 12 to open the celebration. Other events included a pageant written by Charles Hull Wolfe, which was produced twice in 1970. Other suggested events and actions, such as the construction of a Pilgrim fountain on the waterfront, or the purchase of the old railway yard for parking were dropped.

<sup>19</sup> The accompanying figure of Gov. William Bradford, also done by Dallin at the time, unfortunately had to wait until the 1970's to be cast and erected. The cost of the bronze casting, expensive enough at the time in the 20's had become so much more so 50 years later that the Bradford statue is considerably smaller (even less than life size) than the imposing Massasoit, affording perhaps some satisfaction to the critics of the Pilgrims.

<sup>20</sup> *Final Report of the Plymouth-Provincetown Celebration Commission.* Plymouth, MA.:1971



On March 30, 1971, the two major groups met together and Martha Reardon was appointed Executive Director for the celebration. An immediate problem was that the various funds raised or appropriated earlier had been exhausted, and more money had to be found to provide the major events which occurred between May and November 1971.

The Pilgrim Society sponsored a series of lectures on Thursday evenings. Speakers included Pilgrim Hall Director Lawrence D. Geller, Antiquarian Society Curator Rose T. Briggs, Plimoth Plantation Assistant Director James J.F. Deetz, Drs. Peter Gomes, Robert Bartlett, Jordan Fiore, and a number of other authorities on the Pilgrim period. There were also a number of religious services throughout the period, from a cold outdoor service by the Duxbury First Parish at Plimoth Plantation on November 28, 1970, to one a year later in the First Parish Church at Plymouth.

Other events included the Plymouth Antiquarian Society's 50th Corn-planting ceremony at the Harlow House on May 19, 1971; a re-enactment of the first peace treaty at Plimoth Plantation which included members of the Mashpee Wampanoag on August, 29; the sailing of the Pilgrim Shallop from Provincetown to Plymouth by a crew from Annapolis on September 11-12; and a re-enactment of the "First Thanksgiving" at the Plantation on Thanksgiving Day. Various concerts were held in August and September, and a number of receptions, displays and observations centered on Thanksgiving, 1971.

A series of events were tied together as the "350th Pilgrim Harvest celebration" and marked by a poster designed at Mass. Art (with an ear of corn and a red harvest moon on a rather dark yellow and blue background). They included a book show, meetings, flea market, art show, an agricultural show, a symposium (the last two sponsored by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society), the 1971 annual Massachusetts Heritage Day, and a Plymouth Industry show at the Cordage.

There was also a series of Native American events in Mashpee and elsewhere, such as Indian Sabbath services, Indian Concerts at the Plymouth Outdoor Art Show, an Indian Forum at the Museum of Science in Boston (with concomitant protest by Frank James and the Federated Eastern Indian League), and a "Student Powwow" at the Chiltonville Congregational Church on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, 1971.

One aspect which met with considerable criticism at the time was the perceived failure to acknowledge the Native American contribution. Wampanoag leader Frank James was prevented from delivering a historically cogent if partisan address by the authorities in charge of the celebration which led to some bitterness and the establishment of a permanent protest, the Day of Mourning, each Thanksgiving. In 1970, this protest led to a raid on Mayflower II and the unceremonious jettisoning of the manikin of Master Christopher Jones into the harbor.

The closest approach to the old centralized and traditional celebrations were a Pilgrim Thanksgiving Clambake at the Mayflower Inn (on November 26), and the Thanksgiving Parade (on November 27). These old fashioned events, and the publication of Dr. Bartlett's *The Pilgrim Way*, Peter Gomes' new edition of Thacher's *History of Plymouth*, the conservation of early records and books, and the restoration of the 1749 Court House were the most traditional expressions of Pilgrim interest in the myriad events that have since come to characterize attempts to retain the old pieties in a changing world. What the result of the current 375th Anniversary Celebration (under the able management of OCC Member Brian Alosi) will be, where the same diversity of agendas and official uninterest are in evidence, remains to be seen.

**Next Issue (June, 1995) : Travel to Plymouth  
(Rail and Steamer), a Presidential bio, and  
more!**



*Old Colony Day. First Celebration of the Landing of our Forefathers.*—Friday, December 22. The Old Colony Club, agreeably to a vote passed the 18th instant, met, in commemoration of the landing of their worthy ancestors in this place. On the morning of the said day, after discharging a cannon, was hoisted upon the hall an elegant silk flag, with the following inscription, 'Old Colony,' 1620. At eleven o'clock, A. M. the members of the club appeared at the hall, and from thence proceeded to the house of Mr. Howland, inn-holder, which is erected upon the spot where the first licensed house in the Old Colony formerly stood; at half after two a decent repast

**Discourse,**  
DELIVERED AT PLYMOUTH,  
DECEMBER 22, 1820.

—in commemoration of  
THE FIRST  
SETTLEMENT OF NEW-ENGLAND.

BY  
**DANIEL WEBSTER.**

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE  
CELEBRATION BY THE PILGRIM SOCIETY

AT PLYMOUTH,

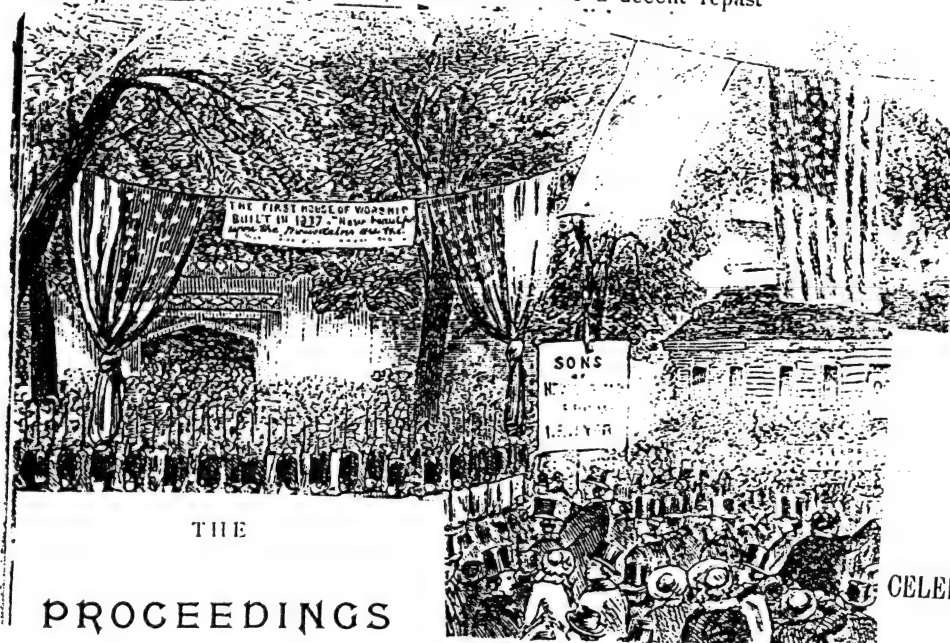
DECEMBER 21, 1870,

OF THE

hundred and fiftieth Anniversary

OF THE

INDEPENDENCE OF THE PILGRIMS.



THE  
PROCEEDINGS

Old Plymouth  
Days and Ways

CELEBRATION BY THE PILGRIM SOCIETY

AT PLYMOUTH, AUGUST 1st, 1889

COMPLETION OF THE  
NATIONAL MONUMENT TO THE PILGRIMS

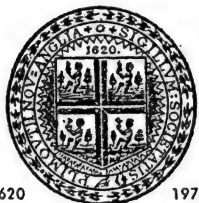


HANDBOOK OF THE  
HISTORIC FESTI-  
VAL IN PLYMOUTH  
MASSACHUSETTS  
JULY 28, 29, 30, 31  
AUGUST 2 AND 3  
MDCCCXCVII

MARGARET MacLAREN EAGER

*Plymouth*  
*350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*  
*Committee*

BOX 350, PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS 02360



1620

1970

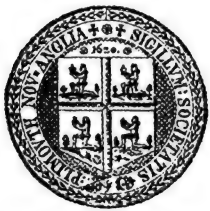
P.O. Box 3321 • Plymouth, Massachusetts 02361  
Brian A. Alosi, Chairman

*375th Anniversary Steering Committee*

Press Release

For more information, contact: Brooks Kelly/617-826-3136





# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, September, 1995. Ser. 1, No.16

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## NEWS AND NOTES

Although we promised that the next issue would include an essay on Plymouth Travel (Rail and Steamer) and another presidential biography, one has given us one of the latter, so this paper will have something else entirely.

We were obliged to skip our June issue this year due to the press of business and the demands of the 375th Anniversary. We trust that future issues will be more regular in appearance, but we are running out of topics that can be easily covered and need suggestions for future articles as well as any interesting material which might be suitable for publication in this series. Please get thinking on this. The present topic, that of early mechanized travel to Plymouth, was the suggestion of Gray Perry, and he has kept up his end in supplying the editor with help—so we now expect some other members to rouse themselves and come to the aid of the Quarterly.

## STEAMING INTO PLYMOUTH

The 19th century saw technological innovation in many fields, and one of the most important of these was the introduction of mechanized travel. The steam engine brought unparalleled speed and ease to travel on both land and sea, and started the "shrinking of the world" that continues apace today. Visitors had made their way to Pilgrim Plymouth long before the advent of steam, but it took a lot of determination to make one's way by horseback or by coastal schooner from the relative civilization of Boston or Newport to the sandy outback of Plymouth and Cape Cod.

The first steam vessel to arrive at Plymouth was the *Eagle* in 1818. Built in New London Connecticut, the 80 ton *Eagle* had a passenger capacity of 200 people. She had been in service in the Chesapeake under Captain Moses Rogers (later commander of the *Savannah*, the first steamer to cross the Atlantic) before coming to Massachusetts. Her captain in 1818 was Lemuel Clark, whom W.T. Davis notes had Plymouth connections and was married to

Plymouth Lydia Bartlett and had a son William who grew up here. Davis goes on to say that the *Eagle* "remained here a number of days, having her berth at Carver's Wharf and taking daily excursion parties into the bay. She was eight hours on her passage from Boston, making five and one-half statute miles per hour." Pilgrim Hall has a oil painting of the *Eagle*, which was presented by George P. Cushing of the Nantasket Steamboat Company, which traced its corporate lineage back to that vessel.

The *Eagle* was also commemorated in 1820 on the first Pilgrim souvenir, a blue and white Staffordshire plate made by Enoch Wood and Sons of England. The primary picture is a copy of Samuel Hall's 1800 engraving showing the Pilgrims landing on the Rock, but along the rim are various patriotic decorations such as "George Washington Born 1732 Died 1799", "American Independence July 4, 1776", a scene depicting the sinking of the British brig *Boxer* by the American *Enterprise* in 1813 (what association this has with Plymouth, except for the fact that the town was very involved with the War of 1812, is unknown), and a picture of the *Eagle* (with an eagle perched next to it as a clue to its name).

After the *Eagle* departed (and for a time ran from Boston to Hingham), the next steamship to attempt service in Plymouth was the *General Lafayette*, which arrived in 1828.

"She was built in New York in 1824, and bought in Boston by James Bartlett, Jr., James Spooner and Jacob Covington, with the view of establishing a steamboat line between Plymouth and Boston. According to her enrollment in the Plymouth Custom House, issued September 16, 1828, her name was *General Lafayette*, with one deck, two masts, 82 feet, 7 inches long, 6 feet, 1 inch deep, and measured 92 54-95 tons. For her better accommodation the owners of the boat bought Jackson's wharf at the foot of North street and contracted with Jacob and Abner S. Taylor to build at the end of the wharf an extension nine hundred feet long and twenty-eight feet wide with a T at the end projecting northwesterly one hundred feet square. The extension of piles and timber plank was not completed until the autumn

of 1828. In the meantime the *Lafayette* ran through the summer of that year from Hedge's wharf [in front of Plymouth Rock], leaving Plymouth at hours when the tide served, and reaching Boston at hours which upon her arrival would enable her to reach the dock. Of course her fuel was wood, and she made the passage in five hours, making about eight and one half stature miles per hour. The point reached by the wharf was the point on what was called the Town Guzzle, where at mean low tide there was four or five feet of water. With that depth of water a small steamboat like the *General Lafayette* could reach the extreme end of the wharf at all times. The Town Guzzle was a circuitous one... Steamboats of moderate length found little difficulty in rounding the curves, but those of greater length found it anything but easy work. I remember once the steamboat *Connecticut* left the wharf at near low tide, with a spring line from her bow to the wharf to twitch her around the curve, and as the line tautened, it snapped, the hither end coming back like a whiplash and tripping up, without serious injury, about a dozen persons standing near the cap log. I learned a lesson then and there always to stand at a distance from a spring line.

"Returning now to the *Lafayette*, it can only be said that her career was a short one. Under the command of Capt. Truman C. Holmes, with Seth Morton as steward, she ran through the seasons of 1828 and 1829, the latter year making her berth at Long wharf, or Steamboat wharf, as for many years it was called, and then was laid up at Tribble's Dock, or building yard, as it was called, north of the wharf to die... In 1830, the year the *Lafayette* ceased to run, the steamboat *Rushlight*, Capt. Currie, came to Plymouth and advertised to carry passengers to Boston for a dollar and a quarter, the fare by stage being two dollars, but how long this arrangement continued I do not know. I know of no other steamboat in Plymouth until 1839, when the *Suffolk* ran on excursions to Boston and elsewhere during July and August. In 1840 a small steamboat, the *Hope*, Capt. Van Pelt, with a light draft, made regular trips to and from Boston for part of the season. I recall an incident suggested by the mention of her name. On the 11th of September in that year I was called to Plymouth, being then in college, on the account of the death of my brother-in-law, Ebenezer G. Parker, and left an order at the stage office in the City Hotel on Brattle street, to be called for by the stage at my grandmother's in Winthrop Place, leading out of Summer street. The *Hope* left Boston at two o'clock, reaching Plymouth at six. The

leaving hour of the stage was the same, and as the passengers on that day were few in number, it was exactly two when I took my seat by the side of Samuel Gardiner, the driver. As we started, Mr. Gardiner said to me, 'Mr. Davis, I am going to beat the boat today.' The air was clear and exhilarating, the four horses were in good trim, and the road was in its best condition. Mr. Gardiner did not leave the box during the trip, the horses were ready at the three places where changes were made, and as I dismounted at my mother's house on Cole's Hill, the boat passengers were coming up the wharf. I doubt very much whether any regular stage line in this country has ever traveled as our stage did that day, thirty-six miles in four hours.

"Shortly after 1840 the steamboat *Connecticut* came to Plymouth and took excursion parties into the bay, but I do not remember that she made any regular trips to Boston. In 1844, if I am correct, the steamboat *Express*, Capt. Sanford, ran between Boston and Barnstable, stopping at Plymouth to leave and take passengers. She was a good boat, and made the passage to Plymouth in three and a half hours. Her managers had a flat bottomed barge with scow ends, which, under the charge of Capt. Richard Pope, at low water met her at the upper end of Broad Channel, and exchanged passengers and freight. The return of the barge, by way of the Guzzle, especially with wind and tide against her, was sometimes tedious, frequently consuming an hour. In 1844, the steamer *Yacht* ran a part of the season. After 1845 I know of no steamboats coming to Plymouth, except occasionally on excursions from Boston for the day, until 1880...

"In 1880 the steamboat *Hackensack*, owned, I think, by the Seaver fish guano factory at Duxbury, made regular daily trips to or from Boston, or both, during the summer, except while she was repairing damages occasioned by a fire at Coney's wharf in Boston, where she lay. At that time the whole [Long] wharf, except about three hundred feet, which had been kept in repair, had by the action of storms and ice been practically destroyed, leaving only about an hundred piles within sight above the water. These were pulled up in 1880 by the tug *Screamer*, some of them requiring a force of thirty-three tons to start them from their beds.

"In 1876 an appropriation made by Congress was expended in dredging a channel fifty feet wide and six feet deep from the Broad channel to the wharf, and in later years the width has been



increased to one hundred and fifty feet, and the depth to nine feet, at mean low water. A basin connecting with the channel has been dredged in front of the short wharves so that not only can steamboats of sufficient size reach the docks, but barges drawing sixteen feet of water find no difficulty in berthing at the pockets of the coal dealers. In 1881 the steamboat *Stamford*, commanded by E.W. Davidson, began to run regularly from Boston to Plymouth and back daily, and continued to run uninterruptedly until 1895, under the same command, except during a part of one season, when, owing to some difficulty between Capt. Davidson and her owner, Nathaniel Webster of Gloucester, the former was temporarily displaced. Capt. Davidson also ran the *Shrewsbury* and *Wm. Story* each one season, and as a supplementary freight boat after the close of one season the *Shoe City of Lynn*. Since 1897, or about that time, the following have run on the route: The *Lillie*, *Putnam*, *O.E. Lewis*, *Henry Morrison*, *Plymouth*, *Cape Cod*, *Governor Andrew*, and *Old Colony*. During one season the *Stamford* ran after her name was changed to *Endicott*. During the last three seasons the Nantasket Steamboat Co. have had exclusive leases of available wharves, and have run the *Governor Andrew* and the *Old Colony*. The latter is a new boat [1908] running in 1904 for the first time, and is recognized as the most convenient, safest and most elegant excursion boat in the waters of Massachusetts. The wharf is now, with three hundred feet of its old timber and pile extension, owned by Charles I. and Henry H. Litchfield of Plymouth, who, having fitted it expressly for steamboat purposes, kept in excellent repair, and have leased it to the Nantasket Steamboat Company. The Pilgrim Society, owning Pilgrim wharf, refrain from leasing it to any other competing line, believing that the Nantasket Co. should be encouraged in their efforts to establish a permanent and successful enterprise."<sup>1</sup>

The primary passenger line between Boston and Plymouth in the late 19th century was the aforementioned Nantasket Beach Steamboat Company. They were proud of their links with the earlier craft that are mentioned by Davis, and gave some extra details of the boats in their 1916 literature. They think that the *Lafayette* was originally called the *Hamilton*, and was built in Philadelphia in 1829, but Davis' information is better on the dates at least. With the recognition that the historical accuracy of the

line's publication may be a bit loose, it is still interesting to see what sort of steamboats served the South Shore and Plymouth in those early years. After the *Lafayette*, the next vessel listed by the NSC was the *General Lincoln*, built at Philadelphia with her first trip on June 16, 1832; length 95' beam 22', with 14 foot side wheels using two boilers and two engines burning wood, allowing 20 pounds of steam. It was sold to some people in New York in 1844, and the two engines placed in two other craft (the *Storm* and the *Tempest*). The *Mayflower*, built in New York in 1845, was 133 feet long, with a 24'2" beam, drawing 8 feet, 262 tons gross accommodating 800 passengers. Her wheels were 22' in diameter, with a ten foot piston and 30 pounds of steam. Bought by New Yorkers in 1856 and lengthened, the *Mayflower* was purchased by the Government during the Civil War in 1862.

The *Nantasket*, built in New York in 1857, was 146 feet long with a 25' beam, 285 tons gross, with 24' side wheels. Considered the fastest boat in Boston Harbor, she was sold to the Government as well in 1863. Her name was changed to the *Emeline* (sic) and was in 1916 still running between Haverstraw and Newburg on the Hudson in New York. The first *Rose Standish* was built at Brooklyn in 1863. her length was 154 feet, with a 27' beam, 392 tons gross and carried a thousand passengers at a time. The *Rose Standish* was sold to the Frontier Steamboat Co. in Calais, Maine, and destroyed by fire in 1900. The *John Romer* (length 178 feet with a 27 foot beam, and carrying 1000 passengers, purchased in 1869) may never have come to Plymouth, as her main line was between Boston and Hingham. The *Governor Andrew* did, however. She was built in New York by Laurence and Faulkes in 1874; length 172 feet, beam 29 feet depth of hold 9 feet, 498 tons and carrying 1200 passengers. Sold in 1907 to the Boston, Nahant & Pines Steamboat Co., the vessel was destroyed by fire in 1911.

Another *Nantasket* was built at Chelsea by Pierce, Montgomery and Co. in 1878; length 180 feet, beam 29 feet, and also 498 tons with a passenger capacity of 1200. This boat was sold in 1900 to the Long Island Railroad. The *Twilight*, built in New York in the 1850s, was bought by the NSC in 1881. She was 215 feet in length with a 32 foot beam, 636 tons, and carrying 1600 passengers. The *Twilight* was sold to Philadelphia in 1895 and broken up in 1906. The *William Harrison*, also bought by NSC in 1881, was built at Keysport, N.J., in 1864, and

<sup>1</sup> Davis, William T. *Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian*. Plymouth: Memorial Press, 1906, pp. 72-78.

was 152 feet long, with a 26 foot beam, 377 tons, 1000 passengers. She was sold to Buffalo, N.Y., in 1892, and destroyed by fire at Niagara Falls in 1907. The *General Lincoln*, originally called the *Nahant*, was built at Chelsea by Pierce, Montgomery in 1878 was purchased from the Nahant Steamboat Co. in 1884. The *Lincoln* was 168 feet long with a 28 foot beam, 398 tons and room for 1000 passengers. It was sold in 1907. The *Hingham* was built at Chelsea by Montgomery and Howard Co. in 1895. 150 feet long with a 25 foot, six inch beam, she carried 1000 passengers and was sold to the Long Island Railroad in 1900 and renamed the *Orient*.

The Nantasket Beach Steamboat Company advertised eight steamboats in 1916:

The *Mayflower* - built at Chelsea in 1891 by Montgomery and Howard; 728 tons 32 foot, six inch beam, 190 feet long. She was entirely refurnished in 1911 and lengthened to 210 feet.

The *Myles Standish* - built at the same yard as the *Mayflower* in 1895; was 700 tons, 205 long, 33 foot beam with an inclined reciprocating engine.

The (third) *Nantasket* - built at the same yard in 1902; 739 tons, 203 feet long 34 foot beam, with a new boiler in 1916.

The *Old Colony* - built at Chelsea in 1904 by J.K. Montgomery; 741 tons, 190 feet long, 32 foot six inch beam

The *South Shore* - built at the Fore River Shipyard in 1906; 874 tons, 207 feet long, 32 foot six inch beam.

The *Betty Alden* - built at East Boston by the Atlantic Works in 1908; 775 tons, 190 feet long, 31 foot beam. The name was apparently derived from their popular novel of Pilgrim times by Jane G. Austin.

The (second) *Rose Standish* - built by W & A. Fletcher in 1912; 993 tons, 215 feet long and a 43 foot beam.

The *Mary Chilton* - built by William McKie at East Boston in 1916; length 216 feet, with a 32 foot, 5 inch beam and a passenger capacity of 2500.

The *Old Colony*, the *Betty Alden*, the *Rose Standish* and the *Mary Chilton* were all destroyed by fire on November 29, 1929, according to a note later appended to the brochure. The *Rose Standish* was also decorated with a number of Pilgrim murals painted by S. Ward Stanton, who went down on the Titanic.

In 1916 from April 15 to November 1, the steamboats left Rowe's Wharf in Boston at 10 AM and returned at 6 PM for a day roundtrip to Plymouth for a dollar, sixty cents for children. The charge for an hour's trip to Nantasket was twenty five cents (children 15 cents) each way. Staterooms were available on the Plymouth boat (the *South Shore*) and meals cost \$1.00, the galley being under the direction of a French Chef who was known for his chicken and lobster combination dinner. Music was provided by Victoria Reid Ladies Orchestra. A picture of the five women members of the group show them wearing a vaguely maritime uniform with enormous bows, and equipped with a clarinet, cornet, fiddle, snare drum and some sort of maracas-like rattle.

There were rival steamboat services to the NSC such as the one advertised in the Old Colony Memorial in 1888:

The handsome new steamer which is to run between Boston and Plymouth this summer as an excursion boat is christened the Shrewsbury. She is 169 feet long. The saloon is richly fitted with mahogany seats with gold plush hangings and heavy plate windows closely spaced all around the saloon. The main deck is reached by a handsome mahogany stairway with brass mounting and rubber treads. At the stern is the ladies cabin, with stamped leather upholstery on the chairs. She has accommodations for 800 passengers and is fitted with life boats, life rafts and life preservers.<sup>2</sup>

The steamboat lines remained an important passenger service in Plymouth until just before the Second World War<sup>3</sup>, when other forms of transport had largely superseded interest in the steamboat traffic and the war finished the service off.

#### THE STORM OF 1898 AND PLYMOUTH BEACH

There was another steamboat service in Plymouth in the late 19th century which is of interest. That was the little harbor steamers which went from the wharf to the Columbus Pavilion on Plymouth Beach. Built in 1883 by the Plymouth Beach Company, the pavilion and its wharf were put up in two months and had space for dancing, shore dinner parties and other recreations. The *Modoc* (a steam catamaran later named the *Mary Chilton*) and

<sup>2</sup> Illig, Andrea. "Beach parties and boat excursions", in the *150th Anniversary Supplement to the Old Colony Memorial*, July 13, 1972, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> This detail, with thanks, from Cliff Sampson!

the *Hermosa* made the trip back and forth between the waterfront and the beach for five cents a ride, about where the turn of the channel is marked by the big bell buoy today. The captains of the little *Modoc* were Edmund and Albert Morton. The pavilion was sold to Mr. C.L. Willoughby in 1980, who enlarged it. However, it was not destined to make it into the 20th century, as this OCM story by Thomas Lyman describes:

### 30 Beach Homes Swept Away By Storm Of '98

The Northeaster of '98 did great damage to New England, but probably no single act of destruction was more complete than the wiping out of the summer resort on Plymouth Beach.

By the summer of 1898, a thriving little beach resort had grown up near the head of Plymouth Beach. There were over 30 cottages, and the Columbus Pavilion was a favorite eating place for those who liked the salt water on both sides of them as they ate their chowder and lobster.

Hourly, from July 1 to Labor Day, the little "Mary Chilton" chuffed her way from Town Wharf across the bay loaded with excursionists. Compared to the roller-coasters and hoopla of our modern beach resorts, the Beach doesn't seem like much but pleasures were simpler 40 years ago. The swimming was excellent, there was sailing, and the strip of sand gave a pleasant sense of isolation from the world.

One of the prime organizers of the Beach was Charles L. Willoughby of Chicago, a summer resident in Plymouth, who made a considerable fortune with tours of panoramic views. "The Battle of Gettysburg" and such, which [sic] were the forerunners of the movies and were very popular at that time.

Willoughby owned a large part of the property, enlarged the Columbus Pavilion, and helped popularize the resort.

According to M.D. Welsh of Alden street, who now owns the Beach property on which the remains of the old wharf stand, the Columbus Pavilion was almost straight across the bay from Town Wharf, and about a mile below the point.

"When I got here in 1896," said Mr. Welsh, "the cottages and the Pavilion had been up for some years. There was running water there then, the Town having put down the pipe. The pipe was laid above the ground, though, and the

storm wrecked it completely. Most of it was salvaged, but it wasn't laid down again.

"It was the popular place to go during the summer," he went on. "There was the old 'Mary Chilton' under the command of Captain Ed Morton. If you didn't get the steamer, almost everybody owned a sailboat in those days and there was always some way of getting there. Some used to like to walk up the shore."

There is irony in the fact that Willoughby decided to sell out the summer of 1898. Commenting on the news, the Old Colony Memorial remarks that "the beach is a fine piece of shore property and not likely to remain long in the market without a buyer."

It remained too long, however, for Willoughby, who figured his loss at \$10,000 after that disastrous night of November 27.

The Northeaster of '98 started, according to the Old Colony Memorial of that week, "Saturday, with a fine snow driving in from seaward as early as eight in the evening before a moderate breeze. The wind kept rising and by midnight was 'piping fiercely' while the damp snow was clogging everything against which it was hurled by heavy blasts. At daylight the gale had attained a force of about 8[0] miles per hour and the snow was a blinding suffocating cloud. Trees were being uprooted, chimneys blown off, electric light and telephone poles going down in all directions, while masses of wires were being tangled in inextricable confusion."

Church services were abandoned that Sunday, and along the shore, "the scene was both fearful and fascinating. Water street was impassable with a schooner lying across it at one point, and the bridge across Town Brook having galloped upstream until it rested behind J.C. Fuller's drug store [at 46 Market Street, about where the bridge begins today]. Beside it lay a portion of the Columbus Pavilion.

The heavy surf had rolled over the Beach for over a mile, undermining the cottages, and the fierce gale rolled them over into the harbor where they went to pieces and drifted across, masses of wreckage.

Besides the Columbus Pavilion, only one summer cottage remained to tell of the little summer which had formerly stood there. And both these standing structures were almost complete ruins.

For over a mile, what had been a substantial sand ridge was now a low bar.







# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly, December, 1995. Ser. 1, No.17

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## NEWS AND NOTES

Beginning with this issue of the Quarterly, we shall be serializing a draft of a history of Plymouth industry that was written for the Plymouth 375th Committee that was not published as a OCM supplement as planned. The plan was to have a piece worthy of preserving with a number of illustrations showing the old mills and shops which are described in the text. This presentation shall not have the illustrations—many of which are on the walls of the Club—but they may be seen in situ. As president your editor does not contemplate the leisure to do the various articles that should be forthcoming, but trusts that the industrial history will serve as a sufficiently interesting substitute for fresh research. We will also to carry the Past President biographies which have not been presented before. Thus we begin with...

### PAST PRESIDENT'S COLUMN LIONEL FORTINI 1986

Lionel Fortini born in Plymouth on February 19, 1928. He is the son of Bianca and Nando Fortini, who came from Italy in the early part of the 1900s.

Lionel was educated in the Plymouth schools and graduated in 1946. During school and after graduation he worked for the First National Chain Stores. While employed with the chain stores, he advanced to inventory taker for the stores from Hingham to Sandwich. In 1952, he left the First National Stores and became a manager trainee with the Personal Finance Company. Within a period of two years, he was promoted to manager of a new branch opening in Middleboro. Nine months later, he was promoted to a larger office in Taunton and then to Plymouth. In 1964, Lionel advanced to a major office in central Boston, establishing this office as a hiring and training center for clerks and manager trainees for the South Boston Division. In 1970, he was transferred to the Taunton office to re-establish and re-organize a failing branch of the Beneficial system. Within a period of two years, Taunton became an award winning office in the division. During the period of employment with the Beneficial Institute of Lending, Collection and Management. While employed with Beneficial,

won the "Outstanding Silver Award", Presidents Award and one of the first three "Silver Dollar Awards and the first in New England division to receive the "Silver Dollar Oak Leaf Cluster Award."

In 1972, Lionel left the Beneficial Finance to work for the the Mayflower Cooperative Bank in Middleboro. In 1973 he was promoted to manager of the new branch in Plymouth. In 1977, he was promoted to the position of Assistant Treasurer. During the period of employment with the bank, he attended night courses at Bentley College taking courses in banking, real estate appraising, consumer and real estate loans, plus other courses relating to banking.

In 1984, Lionel resigned from the Mayflower Cooperative Bank to take a position as Assistant Vice President with the Myles Standish Credit Union. He opened a new branch in Duxbury and later worked at other branches within the Credit Union. In 1987, anticipating the increase of delinquency in loans, he requested the position of head of that program. He continued in this position until he made the decision to retire in June, 1991.

Lionel married Claire Pederzini of Plymouth and resides at 10 Hopkins Road. They have one daughter, Donna Marie, who resides in Colorado.

He is a former member of the Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, Advisory Board of Trustees of the Jordan Hospital, and other local organizations. He enjoys boating, skiing, golf and bird and decoy carving.

## Plymouth Business and Industry 1620 - 1950

### Part I In The Beginning... (1620-1820)

Plymouth Colony had its origin in the inspiration of a deeply religious community to seek freedom from religious persecution. Without the initial impetus on the part of the Leyden Pilgrims, there would have been no Plymouth Plantation. Their fierce resolve to establish a haven to worship as they believed was right was the underlying force behind both the decision to settle in America, and the successful survival of the little colony where

more baldly commercial ventures in early New England failed. However, when the Pilgrims arrived in Plymouth in 1620, they were seeking more than religious liberty alone. They were also pursuing a measure of worldly success that was denied them in England or Holland. It is therefore not inconsistent that Plymouth Colony should have been initially conceived of as a business venture. The Leyden Separatists could not afford to pay their own way to America, nor to finance the colony until it could become economically self-sustaining. They needed partners with the necessary funds to accomplish their goals. These they found through the offices of Thomas Weston, a London merchant.

Weston represented a group of London businessmen and speculators referred to as "merchant adventurers," that is, business men who were prepared to (ad)venture their capital to support the settlement in America. They were an informal consortium of seventy-odd investors that should not be confused with the official London "Company of Merchant Adventurers," incorporated in 1564 to control the lucrative woolen trade between England and the European continent. Weston's merchant adventurers contracted with the Leyden emigrants and others to form a company of shareholders to carry out the Pilgrim venture. In return, they expected a return on their investment in the form of annual profits and shares in a final division of the company assets. After seven years, the company assets were to be divided among the shareholders, with the profits going to the investors and the property in America to the emigrants. The period of seven (or in some cases, five) years as a term of corporate effort to establish a colony had been suggested by the Crown as early as 1606.

£10 shares could be obtained by either investing money or by emigrating to work in America. The Londoners therefore bought their shares while the colonists got theirs as a form of "sweat equity"—one share for each emigrant over 16 years of age, or a half share for each child between the ages of 10 and 15. Some colonists, such as William Mullins or William White, bought additional £10 shares, while a few adventurers, such as William Collier or Timothy Hatherly, eventually emigrated as well to enjoy a share in the property in New England. The Pilgrims therefore were partners as well as employees in a commercial enterprise.

Unfortunately, trouble between the investors and the emigrants broke out even before the

*Mayflower* set sail, and after three years of continuing expense and no dividends, the original partnership broke up in 1624. The debts of the colony were eventually assumed by four loyal London investors, James Sherley, William Collier, Richard Andrews and Timothy Hatherly, and a committee of eight Plymouth men known as the "Undertakers"—William Bradford, Myles Standish, Isaac Allerton, Edward Winslow, William Brewster, John Howland, John Alden and Thomas Prentice—who undertook to pay off the debt over time. The colonists were assessed annual rates or taxes in bushels of corn and the Undertakers kept a monopoly on the fur trade for a number of years to assist in paying the debt in £200 annual increments. The Plymouth Undertakers were true to their word, and despite troubles with unsatisfactory agents such as Weston or Allerton, they managed to liquidate the debt by 1645. In the meantime, the seven-year division of property (there were no other profits or assets) took place in 1627 as planned. The colonists who received the shares, who became known as the "Purchasers," received various grants in land outside of Plymouth for themselves and their descendants.

The initial plan was that the little commonwealth would pay its way by fishing, in particular by engaging in the profitable cod fisheries that had been attracting English and other European fishermen to New England for a century before the Pilgrims landed. However, the colonists found little profit in the fisheries at first. They were inexperienced at the trade, being as they said, husbandmen or farmers by background. "Fishing is a thing fatal to this Plantation," Governor Bradford sourly observed in 1624 following the misadventures of their coastal vessel, the *Little James*, the death of their shipwright and the loss of vital salt-making apparatus by fire. They were more proficient at raising corn which they could both consume and trade with the Native peoples for furs and pelts, commodities which had a good market back in England.

### **Plymouth Settles In...**

For the first two centuries of Plymouth's history, the townsfolk made their livings from the local resources of land and sea. By the 1630s, Plymouth had become better acquainted with the requirements of both New England fishing and agriculture, and these two occupations provided the livelihood for most of the townsfolk throughout the colonial period. Plymouth fishermen caught cod which were cured on stages such as the one built on Clark's Island by the

Doteys in 1668, and then shipped to Europe and the West Indies. The townsfolk themselves also relied on the annual herring (alewife) catch, which was divided among the residents for their own use. Great care was taken through the construction of special dams and the cessation of milling during the time the fish were running to assure that the herring were able to go up the Brook past the grist and fulling mills to spawn.

Other products for export included tar and pitch extracted from pine knots, oaken barrel staves, clapboards and shingles, cattle (both live and as salt beef), horses and grain. Wood was of course plentiful, but the need to conserve the resource was recognized from an early date. Wasteful practices, such as cutting off the branches of a tree for firewood and leaving the trunk to rot, or casually using other people's trees near the coast to make fish flakes (drying racks), were illegal in the 17th century. Laws were enacted in 1692 to insure that oaken timber and cordwood from the public or common lands were not sold outside of the town, while other wood products, such as tar, spruce and pine boards, cedar fencing, shingles, and clapboards from those areas had export taxes levied on them. During the 18th century inspectors to oversee the local trades were appointed to cull out poor quality or badly packed fish, to keep an eye on the trade in wood and lumber, and to certify and seal leather hides. When certain commodities were in short supply, temporary bans on their export were enacted, as when all export of corn, beans and peas was forbidden without license in 1626, under penalty of forfeiture.

The first cattle arrived in Plymouth in 1624. Their relative economic importance was such that in 1627 the division of the cows and milch goats was as carefully worked out as that of the land and houses. The growth of the Plymouth herd was more successful than many of the other early projects. For example an accounting of the "increase" from the single heifer given to the town's poor by James Sherley in 1624 accounted for a dozen animals in 1638. The cattle and swine were cared for outside of the town by appointed herdsmen, each owner's stock being marked by a pattern of slits and holes in their ears. It was this increase that led to Plymouth's first burst of prosperity.

The first commercial boom in New Plymouth was due to external factors rather than internal industry. In 1630 the colony of Massachusetts Bay was founded. Hundreds and then thousands of English immigrants arrived in the new land, all

needing food and the foundation of new herds of livestock. Until then, the Plymouth colonists had only their own sustenance and payment of their debts to work for, but the golden market to the north changed all that. "The men of Plymouth were quick to take advantage of the market created by the new settlements. Overland and on small coasters they carried their agricultural goods north to Boston to be exchanged for tools, clothing, cooking utensils, candles—all the products of England..." [Rutman, *Husbandmen of Plymouth* p. 14] The trade caused a swift increase in prices, so that a cow was selling for £24 in 1636, three times its price in England. The demand for cattle and corn also caused the scattering of the Plymouthers, who had until that time remained close to the original town. Now more land was worth the effort and outlying farms were quickly created in Duxbury and beyond. Like most booms, this rush to profit did not last. In 1641 cattle prices plummeted from £30 or £20 to £5 or £4. Grain prices fell as well, and a period of economic depression set in 1644 and 1645. Still the brief boom had done its work, and put Plymouth on the path of a modest prosperity based on agriculture and fish.

Trade soon settled down to a smaller but regular export of cattle to the Boston market, and salt beef to the West Indies and elsewhere. Horses were also sent south to the islands, as we can see in an entry in the Town Records for December 29, 1719:

"...shipt on bord the sloop *prosperety* bound for Barbados Samuel Bartlet Master one sorrel hoss of Estimated 2 years old som white in his face his Right Eye a Wall Eye, one iron Gray mare about 4 yers old Branded on her buttock with an X somthing White in her face owned by William barns, A horse of a Dark brown collar estimates about years old owned by John barns Junior, one hors of a lite sorrel collar about 7 years old A White spot in his forehead."

Sheep were raised for their wool and meat, although there was apparently little trade in either outside of Massachusetts. The wool was used locally and the mutton, which was not suitable for salting, eaten fresh. Swine on the other hand, which had been plentiful from the earliest period, could be salted with ease so that salt pork and bacon was another important item of trade.

Agriculture formed the backbone of the local Plymouth economy from the 1620s to the 19th century. Despite the poor soil outside of the

coastal plain around the town itself, the traditional English arable farming practice which united livestock and grain production was the common pursuit of most families. In most cases other trades, whether as weaving, blacksmithing or even fishing, were secondary to the main activity of farming. Taxes were paid in "country pay," that is, in commodities such as corn or tobacco, so the fluctuation of the value and yield of the crops determined the communities' financial health as well as providing its sustenance. In October, 1668, the town set the following values on grain in considering the perennial contention over Rev. Cotton's pay:

Wheat att 4 s (shillings) 6d (pence) a bushell  
 Rye att 3s 6d a bushell  
 pease att 3s 0d a bushell  
 Indian Corne att 3s 0d a bushell  
 Barly att 4s 0d a bushell  
 Mault att 4s 0d a bushell  
 Butter att 0s 6d a pound

Other trades were followed as well to supply the town with the goods and services that could be effectively pursued locally. For example, brick making using Plymouth's plentiful and fine quality clay was undertaken as early as 1643, when a Mr. Grimes was employed to burn a load of bricks at eleven shillings per thousand for the new watch house on Burial Hill. W.T. Davis speculates that this was probably done in the field east of Pilgrim Hall. Other activities can be deduced from the rates, which taxed men not solely on their property but also on their proficiency at their trade:

Serjeant Harlow his facultie being a  
 Copper [cooper] vallued at £40  
 Joseph Bartlett his facultie being a  
 Cooper vallued att £30  
 Samuel Ryder being a Cooper his facultie  
 vallued att £30  
 Joseph Dunham for his facultie being a  
 carpenter vallued att £30  
 James Cole for his facultie Keeping an  
 ordinarie [inn] att £80  
 Thomas Lettice for his facultie Keeping an  
 ordinarie att £20  
 Thomas Lucas his facultie being a Smith  
 att £50  
 Jabez howland his facultie being a smith  
 att £40

#### **Plymouth's Business Expands...**

The first Plymouth industries supported local needs more than they provided production of

exportable commodities. Fishing was a trade which required boats, and it often fell to the fishermen themselves to construct their own craft, which gave rise to Plymouth's modest shipbuilding industry. There was also a coincident need for cordage, tar and cotton sails. Every town needed blacksmiths to provide the production of and repairs to iron tools, fittings, utensils and nails, but the latter were required in greater numbers than a smith could produce alone. Small foundries that had made anchors for the fishing boats were easily modified to make nails as well. Barrels were the primary containers for the secure transportation of both wet and dry commodities, such as fish and tar, and their staves could be a useful industrial product in a town with great supplies of wood. In time each of these needs, especially after the American Revolution ended the British colonial trade, resulted in the growth of local industries. However, the first need for mills in Plymouth was in the production of meal and flour, the colonists' basic staple.

The first mill built in Plymouth wasn't a grist or grinding mill that used millstones, but rather a "pounding mill" which employed a piston-action device to crush the corn into meal and flour. The location of this first mill presents a historical problem. Dr. James Thacher states that it was built, circa 1633, by Stephen Deane up the Brook near Billington Sea, which W.T. Davis asserts was at "Holmes' Dam" where the stone mill race is today inside Morton's Park. However, Davis also asserts that Deane's mill near Homes' Dam was built previous to 1632 and that the mill for which Deane received permission to build was at the site of the Jenney grist mill at the foot of Spring Street. Whatever the facts, Deane did operate a pounding mill until his death in 1633, with the understanding that he would forfeit that right if anyone was ready to build a more efficient grist mill. In March, 1636, John Jenney was given permission to erect a true grist mill, at the site where the re-created mill is today:

That Mr. John Jenney shall have liberty to erect a Milne for grinding and beating of corne upon the brooke of Plymouth, to be to him and his heirs forever. And shall have a pottle [2 quarts] of corn toule [toll] upon every bushel for grinding the same for the space of the two first years next after the milne is erected, and afterwards but a quart at a bushel for all that is brought to the milne by others, but if he fetch it and grind it himself or by his



servants then to have a pottle toule for every bushel as before.

John Jenney died in 1644, after which it appears that his son Samuel continued the work until he moved to Dartmouth in 1683. In that year the town granted the land and rights to Charles Stockbridge with the guarantee that he should get one sixteenth of each bushel (that was fit to grind) and an additional eleven pounds to defray the cost of raising the milldam and constructing a watercourse for the herrings to use. However, Stockbridge died the following year, and the privilege was sold to Nathaniel Church. It passed through a number of hands over the next two centuries, until all of the rights were sold to the Robbins' Cordage Co. in 1838. The old mill burnt in 1847 together with some buildings of the Robbins Company.

The Jenney (or "upper") grist mill wasn't the town's only mill. During the 18th and 19th centuries there were other small water-powered grist mills and at least one windmill in Plymouth. W.T. Davis mentions a small grist mill on the Robinson Iron Works site (now the Summer Street Playground) in the early 19th century, in addition to the upper and lower grist mills at the Jenney site and at the Market St. bridge. In 1857 the Henry Walling map of Plymouth County shows a grist mill on Beaver Dam Brook on the east side of the State Road just across from the Indian River Inn and another on Hedge's Brook in North Plymouth. There seems to have been one as well on Sandwich Road on Shingle Brook. The "lower" grist mill on Town Brook on the northwest side of the Market Street Bridge was built in the mid-18th century by the Bramhall family and later operated by Ichabod Morton & Co., and was in continuous service until the mid-1920s. The wind mill stood for years on the hill above the Green, as can be seen in illustrative prints of the town. A note in the *Boston Evening Transcript* (3/14/1934 sec.4, p.1) mentions that the mill was constructed before 1793, and was later moved to Eastham, Massachusetts, where it survived.

As the grist mills were the result of the town's need for grain processing, the fishing industry also commanded a number of on-shore support services, including ship building, rope making and fish curing. For miles along the seaside the fishermen established their "flakes", woven alder hurdles (frameworks of sticks formed into a rough rectangular mat or screen) set on waist-high poles. On these the split cod were placed to dry in the sun once the salt that had preserved them on the fishing voyage had been rinsed away. Around

Hobshole to the south and along the shore below the lots on Court St., acres of drying fish lent an inescapable odor to the neighborhoods when the onshore wind blew. These cured fish were barreled and shipped aboard Plymouth schooners to Spain and the West Indies and provided a living for the Plymouth seamen from before the Revolution until well into the 19th century. The ships also needed rope for their rigging, cotton canvas for their sails and forged anchors to hold them on the fishing banks as the cod and mackerel fishermen caught their fish using long lines and hooks. It was for these reasons that Plymouth came to make the rope, the cotton duck canvas, the anchors, the barrels, the fishing lines and even the boats themselves.

Plymouth's shipbuilding industry, which had begun in Pilgrim times, occupied a number of shipbuilding yards, the location of which, unfortunately, is not clear. W.T. Davis locates two early 18th century yards on the town waterfront, one below the foot of Middle Street, and the other on the north bank of Town Brook, where the entrance of Brewster Gardens is today. Others were apparently up and down the shore where ever room and wood to build with could be found. Most of the boats built were small coastal vessels needed for the fisheries, but larger ships were constructed as well. Fishing and trade to Liverpool, Spain or the West Indies employed many Plymouth men and ships. The wealthiest families of eighteenth century Plymouth acquired their wealth through trade and shipping. The Plymouth fleet before the American Revolution consisted of about seventy fishermen of thirty to thirty-five tons each and about twenty merchant vessels. The fishing trade concentrated on cod and mackerel, which were cured and exported to the West Indies and southern Europe. Trade was bound up in the colonial trade of the British Empire, which limited the venues for Plymouth ships. When the Plymouth fleet was largely destroyed or put out of action during the Revolution, it was also freed from the restrictions it had accepted under British rule.

After the dislocation of trade and commerce during the war, Plymouth worked hard to restore its fleet. M.S. Belcher notes the construction of 22 vessels between 1784 and 1801, and another 62 between 1802 and 1813. The town enjoyed an unprecedented burst of prosperity at the turn of the nineteenth century: "...an atmosphere of comfort and wealth began to pervade a community which had long felt serious burdens, and had never before enjoyed the superfluities of luxurious living." (Davis *History of Plymouth* 95).

There was a short-lived Plymouth newspaper, the *Plymouth Journal* in 1785, and in 1797 the Plymouth Aqueduct Company was incorporated to construct the first aqueduct in the United States to bring water through wooden pipes from near Billington Sea to the downtown area.

This prosperity was short lived. The terrible (for New England in particular) Embargo of 1807 during which all American ports were closed, threw Plymouth into an economic depression. The town petitioned President Jefferson to lift the crippling embargo in 1808, but though they received a solicitous reply, the stoppage continued. The town, like the rest of New England which contemplated secession from the Union over the Embargo and the subsequent highly unpopular War of 1812, continued to petition and protest to no avail, while its fishing fleet was reduced to only five vessels by 1815.

Once again, however, Plymouth bounced back. New vessels were built and put into service, so that 46 fishing boats and a hundred trading vessels were putting out of Plymouth by 1820. Plymouth ship building was still the top economic performer in 1837 with the production of 22 vessels worth \$214,280, although the trade would precipitously decline during the following decade. Fishing in particular remained central to Plymouth's financial health. There were consistently more men employed in the fisheries than any other industry and fishing was one of town's the top money producers until the Civil War. However, although shipping and fishing remained important elements of the Plymouth economy, they were now joined by the new wave of industrial development that would soon

dominate the region and which brought about considerable change in the old town.

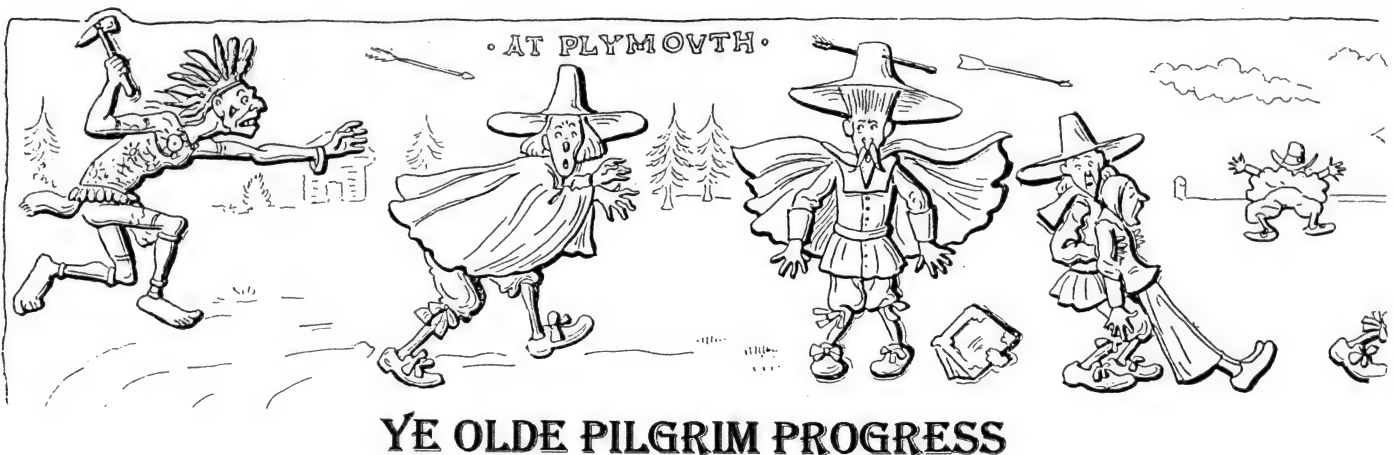
There were also notable survivals of the old home industries, especially in the manufacture of shoes and men's stocks or collars, which actually brought more money to Plymouth families before the Civil War than many of the new factories. In 1855, for example, the making of collars and stocks (Manter and Blackmer made their steel boning) employed 245 Plymouth people and brought in \$825,500, more than was made in either the cordage or iron industries. This slop work, as it was called, was done on a piecework basis, with the raw materials furnished by three agents who then collected the finished collars. People took thin wooden patterns and cut the cloth to size, 48 pieces at a time, with a short knife. The pieces were then sewn, turned, re-stitched, the bands put on and the button holes cut and finished. The stocks or collars were then washed, bleached, blued pressed starched and pressed twice before they were ready to return for payment. The same was true for the shoes, which were done at home in a similar manner before they were returned to agents such as Henry Mills, Lysander Dunham or William Chubbuck. Other specialists did the dressing of the leather, cutting of the pieces or made the heels. Shoes in 1855 accounted for more income in Plymouth than the foundries and plate mills. Nevertheless, it would be the mills and factories which would truly transform the town and the livelihood of its residents.

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Next Issue (March, 1995) : Plymouth Business II, a Presidential bio, and more?

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# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

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## NEWS AND NOTES

In this issue we continue with our Past Presidents, and another part of Plymouth Business...

### PAST PRESIDENTS' COLUMN

#### EDWIN LOUGEE III

1992

Edwin Lougee, III, was born June 29, 1927, in Newton, Mass., the son of Edwin Lougee, Jr., and Ruth Dimond Lougee. In his early years the family lived in Hamden and Woodbridge, Conn., before returning to the Boston area in 1938. It was at that time that Ted's grandparents purchased a home in Duxbury where he spent many summers. In 1954 he and Joan LaForest, daughter of Oscar and Lillian LaForest of Plymouth, were married. They have lived in Duxbury since that time. The Lougees are the parents of four children: Susan Thomas, Christine Merry, Jane Wheble and Richard (Skip) Lougee, and have at present 10 grandchildren. Skip is a third-generation member of the Old Colony Club, following in the footsteps of his grandfather Oscar LaForest who was a member in the 1940s.

Ted Lougee commenced a career in the insurance industry in November, 1946, starting as a messenger for an insurance agency, working days and attending Boston University evenings. Messenger days didn't last long, with advancement through various Underwriting positions. There was an interruption of two years during the Korean War for service in the U. S. Navy as a Quartermaster on a destroyer. In 1954, he left company ranks and was employed by a small agency as a broker, before moving to a larger agency. In 1967, he established his own agency, which has grown substantially over the years. His son Skip has now taken over control and management of this business.

Public service has included serving on various committees for the Town of Duxbury. He has been a Lector for his church as well as scheduling all Lectors for many years. For several years he served on the Executive Council of the Insurance Brokers Association of Massachusetts. Through the years he has maintained membership in several trade organizations. He is also a former

member and officer of the Kiwanis Club of Duxbury.

## Plymouth Business and Industry 1620 - 1950

### Part II Plymouth Industrializes I: Town Brook

The Embargo and the war influenced Plymouth merchants to diversify their investments and to look into alternative sources of income. Men such as Thomas Davis, the Scotsman John Russell, Barnabas Hedge, Joshua Thomas and Deacon Ephraim Spooner were in the forefront of the new fields of investment which gave rise to Plymouth's nascent industries. The most important of these were nails and rivets, cotton thread and sailcloth and cordage. These three industries, together with the later production of worsted, were the basis for Plymouth's 19th century economic growth.

The story of Plymouth's industrial past begins with her several brooks. Today Town Brook hardly inspires the image of an industrial waterway, despite the existence of the re-created Jenney Mill, and Plymco occupying the last surviving fragment of the stream's mill-lined past. Even less suggestive are the other streams used for water power, such as Hedges' Brook in North Plymouth, Eel River, Shingle Brook, or even little Hobshole Brook. Yet until the need for water power was superseded with that of transport in the late nineteenth century, most of the town's industrial capacity could be found on these modest streams. The public value of Plymouth's primary waterway, Town Brook, was recognized from an early date, and rights to employ the water power were licensed to various parties. Eventually seven distinct junctures or "privileges" were established and a fifty-year lease of the rights to them sold to the combined mill owners in 1821 for \$5000, payable with interest over a ten year period. The town used the interest, which amounted to about \$300 per year, to help support those Plymouth widows who were not already being supported as paupers, with the remainder being divided among those citizens who paid the poll tax. The \$5000 principle was invested for the good of the community.



The mill privileges on Town Brook have been traditionally numbered from the Standish Mills dam, although there was another mill dam upstream just below Billington Sea. It was there that Samuel Deane probably established the first Plymouth mill, circa 1633, before it was moved to the Jenney Mill site at the foot of Spring Lane. Holmes' Dam was apparently seldom if ever actually employed after that. In 1783 a Joseph Ryder petitioned the town for the construction of a sawmill, which apparently only functioned a few years if at all. The next attempt to utilize the site occurred about 1797, when William Holmes built a mill there, perhaps as Kelleher notes, a gristmill, but was restrained from operating it due to law suits from the owners of the lower privileges. Davis notes that the structure was later bought by William Seymour, who used the timbers to build the house on the corner of Oak and Summer Streets in 1825.

Using M. S. Belcher's designations, the water powers or mill privileges begin with the Standish Mills (Plymco) as #1, then, going down stream, Plymouth Upper Mills (the stone bridge on the east side of the pond below Plymco) is #2, Plymouth Lower Mills (where a remaining town barn is today) is #3, the Robinson Iron Works (the Summer St. playground) is #4 and also includes #5 (just east of Newfield St, near where Prison Brook enters on the north side of Town Brook through a culvert), the Jenney Mill site is #6, and the lower Grist Mill (Market St. Bridge) is #7.

The first privilege on the Brook was established just east of Deep Water Bridge (where Billington St. crosses over the Brook) where the Plymco plant was until recently. A leather mill which processed leather hides was built here by John Thomas about 1771, who sold it to several partners in 1777. A snuff mill was erected at the site by Solomon Inglee in 1788, who also built the fine brick house on the southerly bank of the Brook as a residence. The site passed through several hands before a cotton mill was built in 1812 by Samuel Spear, William Davis and Nathaniel Russell, Sr., and promptly burned down the following year, to be replaced with a four story building containing 1600 spindles and 34 looms on which 54 workers manufactured about 1000 yards of cotton cloth a day. The mill burned down again in 1843. The site was bought in 1855 by the Samoset Mills Corporation, which built a new factory for the manufacture of cotton thread. Samoset Mills was bought by John B. Turner in 1872 and converted to the manufactory of printed cotton cloth, until it was sold to John C. Cobb in

1879 and renamed first the "Billington Mills" and in the 1880s the "Standish Mills". In 1893 the mill was converted for the manufacture of woollen cloth as the Standish Worsted Company. The Standish Mills first supported 30 looms, but by 1905 the number had increased to 80 and a finishing department (analogous to the long vanished fulling mill) was added. The writer's great aunt, Beatrice Ferguson Haire, worked at Standish Worsted as a girl, picking imperfections off the finished cloth with sharp pointed tweezers. Standish Worsted flourished with military contracts during the First World War, but there was a considerable drop in custom after the early 20s. The absentee owners in New York grew discouraged and the mill was closed and abandoned in 1930. A surviving section was employed by the Plymco Millwork Company to make windows and such from the 1960s to the early '90s.

The second privilege was located where the stone bridge crosses Town Brook from Billington St. next below the Plymco dam. A forge was built there by Solomon Inglee before 1790 and used for the manufacture of anchors, plough shares, sleigh shoes and so forth. Inglee lost the foundry in a law suit to Jacob Albertson in 1793, after which it came into the possession of Nathaniel Russell and Company in 1806 which installed a rolling and slitting mill for the production of nails. Processed iron was bought either from the Federal Furnace works in Carver or as scrap from abroad. The iron was first "puddled" or melted and cast into a ball, after which it was hammered into a square block which was rolled into billets or thick slabs. The billets were then reheated and put through the plate mill rollers to produce a thin sheet which was slit into strips from which nails could be made. The earlier production of nails was done as piecework in Plymouth homes during the winter months, as the heating and heading could be easily accomplished on an ordinary hearth. The invention of nail making machinery by Jacob Perkins and others made the old craft work obsolete, and the entire process was soon handled at the mill itself.

The mill was leased in part by Oliver Ames from 1807 to 1813 to produce shovels. Ames later became famous for his shovels after he moved back to North Easton and founded his own company, but the revival of trade with England following the War of 1812 brought a flood of cheap shovels which undercut his Plymouth effort. Ames, by the way, lived in the Long House on Summer St. during his tenure at the mill. The mill



site, which with the rest of the N. Russell & Co. property became the personal property of Nathaniel Russell, Jr., in 1837, was sold to the Plymouth Mills Company in 1854. It eventually became the Plymouth Mills "Upper" works, which continued in operation until 1926. The buildings stood empty until they were removed by the early 1940s.

In 1800 the third privilege, which was located where the Brook goes underground through a culvert near the old town barn on Billington St., was bought from William Crombie by Heman Holmes and Zadock Packard (who sold his share to Barnabas Hedge the following year). They operated a forge which they sold to N. Russell & Co. in 1815. In 1822, the *Old Colony Memorial* described the plant as consisting of "a Rolling and Slitting mill (double geared), a Nail Factory, containing 12 machines for cutting and heading at one operation—2 cutting and 12 heading machines—2 brad machines—and 1 machine for Brads and Nails—one Air furnace for casting machinery—and 1 steel furnace." This plant also became the property of Nathaniel Russell, Jr., who sold it to Jeremiah Ferris and Oliver Edes in 1844, who had moved their company for the manufacture of rivets from Marshfield to Plymouth. Oliver Edes had invented a rivet machine which would cut and form rivets from wire, which allowed America to compete with effectively compete with European imports for the first time. The factory became the nucleus of the Plymouth Mills Co. (incorporated 1845), and after 1854 it became the corporation's "Lower" works. By that time Edes had already sold out to Ferris in 1850, and become partners with Nathaniel Wood (who had a small shop behind his house on Summer St. near Willard Place) to make zinc shoe nails, tacks and rivets on Shingle Brook in Chiltonville.

The Plymouth Mills sites continued to grow and prosper through the century. Plymouth Mills eventually acquired the Robinson Iron property at the fourth (and fifth) privilege in 1898, which was used to send electrical power to the manufacturing sites upstream. After 1900, however, the company began to gradually reduce the extent of its operations. By 1926 it was determined that the company was no longer viable, and the decision was made to close the plants. By 1930 all of the assets had been disposed of and the property was sold to the town. Part of the lower mill was used by the town as headquarters of the Highway department, and as a storage facility by Ronald Reed until 1966 when

a fire destroyed much of the old structure. Another section at the westerly end of the complex was turned by Arthur Ellis & Sons into a curtain factory in 1937, which moved to its current site on Court St. before the fire.

The fourth privilege, where the dam above the Summer St. playground is today, was bought from George Watson by his son-in-law Martin Brimmer of Boston in 1792. Brimmer established an oil mill and a grist mill in addition to the first rolling-mill and slitting mill in Plymouth. In 1805 his widow Sarah Brimmer sold the Iron Works to N. Russell & Co. Dr. Thatcher described the plant in 1835:

At this establishment are made about three tons of nails per day. Nearly all the machinery is the invention of Mr. Samuel Rogers, of East Bridgewater, who received large sums for his patents. There is one machine, lately invented and constructed by Mr. Joseph Lucas, of this town, on a new principle, by which, while much of the manual labor is saved, a larger quantity of nails can be made in a given time than by any other machine. As a specimen of its performance, it may be mentioned, that the produce of something less than five hours' work was one thousand and twenty five pounds of 10d or board nails, of the very best quality. Mr. David Bradford, of this town, is the inventor of another nail machine, considered the equal if not superior to the best of the old construction.

Near the rolling-mill, is an air furnace, occasionally used in casting machinery for the iron works. Here is also a furnace belonging to the same establishment, for converting bar iron to blistered steel. Thirty cords of wood are consumed in the process of baking, which requires six to ten days. About eighteen tons are made in a batch.

This property also passed into Nathaniel Russell, Jr.'s ownership in 1837 and was sold by him to the proprietors of the Robinson Iron Works in 1866. The Robinson Works was a locally owned company which supported a puddling furnace, a rolling mill and a nail factory. By the end of the 19th century an additional building was added, but the iron industry in general had moved west to where sources of both ore and coal were located, and the small, older wood or charcoal-burning mills in the east were soon unable to compete. The Robinson Company suffered a strike when it reduced wages in 1884 in response to western competition. Although the Robinson

Works employed about 200 men towards the end, it ceased the production of nails in 1890 and the rolling of plate in 1897. The abandoned plant suffered from a fire in 1900, and in September, 1907, the dam above the mill broke, sweeping away not only parts of the surviving buildings, but also the topsoil from the low area east of the fifth privilege.

The fifth privilege apparently was first used for the grist mill as mentioned earlier, and later to grind clay to repair the furnaces. After the main buildings in the present playground area were removed, the fifth privilege continued to support a small tack factory owned by Plymouth Mills from about 1905 until after 1920. There was also an extensive tannery on the easterly end of this area built by William Crombie ca. 1786 or earlier, as Kelleher notes. The cement walls of the lower millrace, where Town Brook is divided by a small island that once supported part of the mill, can still be seen on the south side of the Brook near Willard Place.

The sixth privilege was where the dam that created "Poorhouse," "Alms' House" (not, as a misguided 1903 map has it, "Arm's House Pond"—someone apparently was confused by the local pronunciation of the consonant "r") or today, "Jenney" Pond, once powered the 1636 Jenney Grist Mill and now supports its re-created successor. The Upper Grist Mill, as we have seen, survived until it was burned in 1847. However, it had become the property of the Robbins Cordage Company in 1838, and it was the Robbins rope walk that dominated lower Town Brook. The Robbins Cordage Company was founded by Deacon Josiah Robbins at some point before 1817, apparently on the site on an earlier ropewalk established by a Mr. Leonard, and was incorporated in 1821, three years before Bourne Spooner established the Plymouth Cordage Company in North Plymouth. The long ropewalk extended along and over Town Brook from where the Jenney Mill is today, under the Market St. bridge and across "Ropewalk Pond", the tidal pond that was filled in to create Brewster Gardens in 1923/4, to a spot near today's entrance to the Gardens. In 1822, the *Old Colony Memorial* described the factory as employing about 75 men and manufacturing six tons of hempen rope each week. Although the ropewalk suffered disastrous fires in 1843 when the ropewalk burned from the mouth of the Brook to the Market St. Bridge, and again in 1847, when the jenny house above the bridge was burned, it was still producing 750 tons of tarred cordage in 1850 and employing 48 men

at a time when Plymouth Cordage was producing 800 tons of rope a year with 70 men. However, the company was obliged to sell its new jenny or headhouse by the upper grist mill in 1860 and went out of business about 1862.

The next use of the sixth privilege was when Samuel Loring purchased the land and privilege in 1863, and moved his small tack factory from Duxbury. In 1872, the mill was a three story, 120 by 70 feet factory, with a breast wheel, two Leffel (turbine) wheels and an 80 horsepower engine. In 1886, Loring's son-in-law and partner, John Parks, enlarged the mill, adding electrical and steam power and increased production. Parks was primarily a promoter who, having his eye on the rampant growth of trusts and monopolies at the time, brought together five of the largest tack concerns in the country, including Loring & Parks in Plymouth, Dunbar, Hobart & Co. in Whitman, the American Tack Co. in Fairhaven, the Taunton Tack Co, and A. Field & Co. in 1891. By 1900 the combination was organized the Atlas Tack Company with headquarters at Fairhaven, but as was so often with such monopolies at the time, the smaller concerns were sacrificed to the larger goal, and the old Loring and Parks mill closed and the machinery was auctioned off in 1903.

The factory was apparently vacant until it was bought by the Bradford and Kyle Company in 1905, which moved from its previous location in the old Methodist church on the corner of Robinson and Market Streets. The Robinson church had been sold to Cornelius Bradford and William S. Kyle, who incorporated their wire manufacturing company in 1885, following the construction of the new Methodist Church on the corner of Court and Brewster Streets. In 1894. Bradford, a Plymouth mechanic and inventor, devised a method by which copper wire could be pulled to a previously unattainable diameter of 0.0015, which was vital to the evolving electrical industry. In 1905, Bradford and Kyle employed 35 men, making wire thin enough that one pound of copper made 25 (or 80 in another report) miles of wire. They also made insulated wire covered with silk and linen for telephones, corsets and, later, radios. The company flourished and expanded during the First World War, but competition from rubber-coated wire in the 1920s brought about a decline. By 1935 the company again employed 35 men, just what it had before the increase in business. The company moved in 1966 to a building off Lothrop St. near the Cold Spring Club, and the mill was demolished in 1968 as part of the Plymouth Redevelopment scheme to make

way for the re-created Jenney Grist Mill. Bradford & Kyle finally went out of business in 1983.

The seventh privilege was located above where the Market Street bridge crosses Town Brook. It was here that George Bonum built the first industrial mill in Plymouth, a fulling mill, behind the houses on the lower end of Summer Street about 200 feet north of the lower grist mill in 1672. At that time, Market Street didn't continue down Spring Hill to the Market Street bridge, which was first built around 1666, but turned west into Summer Street. To cross the Brook, one had to double back diagonally down the steep bank on Mill Lane besides the fulling mill and the grist mill. A fulling mill was used to clean and felt the nap on woolen cloth by pulling and pounding the fabric with water and soap. The presence of such a mill points to the importance of sheep raising and cloth production on home looms by weavers such as Giles Rickard, who lived near the mill on the site of the Friendly's Ice Cream restaurant. In 1702, the town attempted to establish a sheep pasture three square miles in extent that extended from Rochester through Plymouth and Carver to Plympton and Smelt Pond in Kingston. 322 shares were sold to 16 individuals and a shepherd's house and fold to manage about 360 sheep was built, but the scheme proved unworkable and it was abandoned in 1712.

The fulling mill was later moved next to the grist mill, and eventually demolished following the decline in local homespun cloth production in the 19th century. By the turn of the century the seventh privilege supported not only the lower grist mill but also the Bradford Joint Company. Louis Bradford invented a new sheet-metal metal joint for wooden bedsteads in the late 1860s which proved very popular. The Bradford Joint Co. was founded in 1870 and shared the water power with the grist mill, and the new joint was sold all across the country in the 1880s. However, Bradford's patent expired in 1887 and a number of other manufacturers added the joint or ones very much like it to their inventories. In addition, the introduction of metal beds at about the same time further diminished the market. In 1908 the company expanded its efforts into the repair of automobile and boat engines, but was obliged to close in 1912. M. S. Belcher notes that the Bradford joint was still being produced in the 1930s in Illinois. The lower grist mill at 47 Market St., operated by Ichabod Morton & Co., remained in business until the mid-1920s.

Besides those businesses and industries which were accorded particular mill privileges, there were a number of other operations that bordered Town Brook. A small foundry was established in the 1840s by William R. Drew at the mouth of the Brook which soon burned and was rebuilt. It made stoves and "hollow ware" (tinware, iron pots and kettles and such like) through the Civil War, after which it was incorporated in 1866 as the Plymouth Foundry Company. While it employed 45 men, work was not steady, and irregular shut-downs occurred when economic conditions warranted. The foundry manufactured a number of sorts of cast iron stoves (one advertisement in 1893 claimed 1,080 different models!) throughout the years in which such cooking and parlor stoves were both popular and essential, but when gas and electric stoves and central heating became more popular, business waned. There was a marked decline during the 1920s, with frequent changes in management, and the control of the plant was taken over before 1912 by an out of state corporation (Grinberg Brothers of New York), a condition usually fatal to Plymouth industries. The Plymouth Foundry closed in 1935, after several years of intermittent operations.

Other businesses and industries on or near Town Brook, but not dependent on water power included distilleries, a strap manufacturer, a box and barrel company and the Godfrey Seamless Pocket Company. The latter, which had 100 looms turning out pockets from 1885 until about 1890, was situated in the lower part of the Standish Guard Armory/Roller Rink which stood about where the Emond Building is today on Main St. Extension. Benjamin F. Badger operated a "strap shop" on Willard Place from the 1890s until about 1912, where Nathaniel Wood had earlier had a small zinc shop. There was a rum distillery built by Nathaniel Foster and Jonathan Diman in 1752 on the east side of the Market St. bridge where the grassy bank across from Friendly's Restaurant is today. A distillery built by George Watson stood on Water St. on Cole's Hill just below the Salvation Army Building and was taken down in 1814. M. E. Belcher locates a third distillery above the first mill privilege, but with what justification we cannot say. There were no existing distilleries by the time the Temperance movement reached Plymouth in 1827.

The last notable industry on the Brook was the E. & J.C. Barnes Company, which occupied a surviving segment of the old Robbins Cordage ropewalk where the entrance to Brewster Gardens is today. It manufactured both dry (pine) and wet









# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly June, 1996. Ser. 1, No.19

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## NEWS AND NOTES

In this issue we continue with our Past Presidents, and another part of Plymouth Business...

### PAST PRESIDENTS' COLUMN

John J. Petrell, Jr.

1984

John Petrell, Jr., was born on October 6, 1912 in South Braintree, Mass., the son of John J. Petrell and Amelia Diauto Petrell. The family later moved to Rockland, Mass., where John attended school, graduating from Rockland High School. He attended Northeastern University. As a young man in the early 1930s, he became interested in aviation and became a licensed pilot at Clark Airport in Hanover, Mass. He maintained his license beyond his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday until his health caused him to give up active piloting, although he continued to own his own airplane.

John moved to Plymouth in 1936 when his father bought the Plymouth Lumber Company. He worked with his father for many years, eventually assuming management of the business along with his brothers Charlie and Bill. He had several other business interests related to the building material trade and real estate development. John served for many years as a Director of the Plymouth National Bank and its successor banks. In addition to membership in the Old Colony Club and serving as President in 1984, he was active in the Plymouth Rotary Club and various aviation organizations.

John was married in 1935 to his first wife Dorothy and was the father of Joan Petrell Trulli and Natalie Petrell Crociati. After Dorothy died, he married (2<sup>nd</sup>) Laura Lamborghini and (3<sup>rd</sup>) Marie Fiorini. John died on August 31, 1994.

## Plymouth Business and Industry 1620 - 1950

### Part II Plymouth Industrializes II: The Plymouth Cordage Company

Besides the Robbins Cordage Company and the Plymouth Cordage Company, there were several other small line and small rope manufacturers in 19th century Plymouth. They were described in 1850 by William S. Russell. The Robert Cowen Ropewalk, which employed 5 men and manufac-

tured fishlines and twine worth \$4,250 in that year, was located behind the houses on Court Street, and extended (before Brewster St. was opened) from about the second segment of the new municipal parking lot between North and Brewster Sts. to Howland St. The Charles B. Irish ropewalk was behind Pilgrim Hall and extended from Chilton St. to Hedge Place (now Memorial Drive). It was built by Thomas Holmes and Samuel Robbins about 1805, and also employed 5 men and made cordage, lines and twine worth about \$3,800 annually. The Benjamin Dimon ropewalk was located north of Court St. where Ditman Court is today and employed 3 men to make the same sort of light cordage worth about \$2,500 in 1850. There was also a Holmes and Barrows Cordage Company which employed 11 men and made 53 tons of rope valued at \$10,000 in 1850 which may have been on Court St., but we have been unable to identify its location. One of the smaller cordage concerns had been in business before 1832, and is mentioned by Thatcher. Almost all of them were all out of business by 1880, with the surviving Dimon structure being used for storage in 1885.

During the same year (1850) the Plymouth Cordage Company employed 70 men to make 800 tons or cordage worth \$180,000. This company was destined to become not only Plymouth's major employer but also the largest manufacturer of cordage in the world. Its story is more well known than that of the other industries but as Plymouth's largest and most influential industry it is worth going into some detail for those who do not remember "the Cordage". The Plymouth Cordage Company was founded by Bourne Spooner on June 12, 1824, with \$20,000 capital raised from local and Boston merchants. Spooner had learned the art of cordage-making in Louisiana, where he had also observed the inhumanity and inefficiency of slave-manned ropewalks of New Orleans. Returning to Plymouth a trained ropemaker and a fervent abolitionist, he secured two mill privileges on Nathan's Brook in "Bungtown", as the north district of Plymouth was then known. The company grew slowly (its main offices were in a remodeled grist mill for many years), and was overshadowed by the Robbins' works in its early days. By March, 1825, production began at the main ropewalk, which was 1050 feet long and built from lumber imported from Maine. The other important import was the

raw hemp from which the rope and twine was made. The best hemp came from Russia as it had since Pilgrim times, and the Cordage declined to use the inferior native Kentucky hemp except for specific projects or in times of shortage of the better sort. From the beginning, the Plymouth Cordage Company dedicated itself to quality production. The work was originally done by hand using time-honored methods, and there was some resistance to adopting the new spinning machinery before 1838. In 1841, another mechanized improvement was introduced with Moses Day's first continuous sliver (combed hanks of fiber) machine, after which growth and increased production followed apace.

In 1825 the Cordage Company built its first tenement for its employees, who for \$40 a year could rent living quarters with two bedrooms. Although workers came and went, some remained for their whole working life. John Smith, who began work as an apprentice in 1829, was present at the 75th anniversary of the company in 1899. Wages in the early years were as good or better than could be found elsewhere in the business, paying 85 cents a day for common labor, and \$1.16 for skilled spinners. While the initial workers were the local Yankees, the Cordage hired its first of many Irish employees, John Donley, in 1830. Donley worked 66 years at the Plymouth Cordage Company. The first German workers arrived in 1838, and by 1850, 75 men of various ethnic origins were employed, which increased to 140 by 1860. Spooner retired in 1870 at age 80. By then the Cordage was manufacturing, in addition to its maritime cordage, wire core rope, rope for oil drilling, powerdrive rope, binder twine, twine for nets, lobster pot lines, and high quality lariat stock. In 1880 Italian workers began to arrive in increasing numbers.

Plymouth Cordage was one of the more genuinely paternalistic mills around the turn of the century. Under Augustus Loring, the company provided an increasing number of benefits and facilities for its workers, such as the Loring Library, a large dining and meeting hall (Harris Hall), an auditorium, churches, athletic facilities, a kindergarten, community nursing, and pensions. Many more employee houses (and land lots for those who wanted to build for themselves) were provided, and the Company organized a band, evening classes, ball teams, social clubs and events such as employee fairs. However, times changed and the well-meant efforts began to appear condescending and authoritarian. By 1916, the Cordage had weathered its first major strike, and in 1945 the company was unionized, by

which time the old paternalism was only a memory.

The tendency of American business following the Civil War was consolidation to create monopolies of various products. The "Robber Barons" of industry found that combination by means of the newly invented trusts and pools meant less competition and greater profits. The American cordage industry followed this trend when, after the panic of 1873, there was an attempt to regulate prices among ropemakers first by agreements and then by a pool with quotas in 1878. This system was organized to equalize industry profits by fixing prices and by setting quotas of production for each company in the pool. Those companies which exceeded their assigned output had to pay into the pool 2 cents for each pound of rope it sold over its quota, and those companies which produced (or sold) less than their allotted amounts would receive 2 cents for each pound they should have sold. Plymouth Cordage regularly paid the highest penalties into the pool to account for their excess sales, a practice the owners accepted in order to build up their share of the market. By this approach the company was able to increase the level of its allowed quota, and most fortuitously, was able to receive large payments when it was unable to meet that quota following the great fire of January 3, 1885.

The fire destroyed the company's main mill and temporarily crippled production. However, full insurance and the subsidy from the pool, as well as efficient management, actually helped the company use the occasion to modernize and expand. The old mill was replaced with the familiar #1 mill where the main Mill is today. The surviving Brick mill and Slate mill were replaced and a new brick head house built in 1893. In 1899 the #2 Mill was added, and the #3 mill in 1907.

The cordage pool system ceased in 1887, and was superseded by the National Cordage Company, a trust formed by Plymouth's four main competitors in New York. The first move of this combination was to try to corner the supply of raw fiber, and when that failed, to monopolize American rope production through stock purchase or leases of smaller concerns. By 1892, National Cordage controlled 90% of the country's cordage production, and almost got enough Plymouth stock to take over the Cordage as well in 1890, but Plymouth Cordage successfully fought this hostile take-over single-handedly. The trust became over-extended and failed in 1893, touching off a severe financial panic and depression that struck all of American business. Reorganized as United States Cordage, the trust failed again in

1895. Its last effort to survive as Standard Rope and Twine was similarly unsuccessful, and the corporation was liquidated in 1912. Plymouth Cordage had not only fought off the huge trust but had prospered, as the celebration of its 75th anniversary in 1899 demonstrated.

There was a great increase in orders during the First World War, but a sudden concomitant decrease following the war left the Cordage with a large stock of raw materials on hand and orders at only a 25% level of the pre-war norm in 1925, due to the sale of government surplus rope. Sales in 1919 had been at \$29 million, decreased to \$14 million in 1929, and to \$7 million in 1939. The change from fiber cordage to wire cable for the declining maritime trade made binder twine an even more important proportion of the mill's output. Wages and production were cut temporarily to adjust, and many of the extraneous properties, from employee houses to the library, were sold or presented to the town.

The Great Depression did not seriously affect the Cordage and there was no problem with inflated inventory, as was the case in other industries at the time. World War Two brought another feverish boom, which was all the more difficult to deal with because of the lack of available fiber due to the war in the Pacific theater, and the morass of governmental regulations and bureaucratic demands. The lack of supplies continued after the war and led to the necessity of closing for a short period in 1946. Although Plymouth Cordage had successfully weathered the challenge of the trusts, two world wars and a depression, changing times and conditions would accomplish what these more dramatic events had been unable to. A steady decline in demand, a more demanding workforce and competition from down south and abroad led to the sale of the company to Columbia Rope in 1965, and in 1971 Plymouth Cordage ceased production forever, putting 149 employees out of work.

### **Plymouth Industrializes III: Hobshole Brook, Eel River and Shingle Brook**

Not all of Plymouth's industrial development occurred north of Town Brook, although almost nothing that would testify to the fact is evident today. Hobshole Brook, for example, makes little impression on the casual passerby today where it crosses under Sandwich St. at the entrance to Nook Road. The small stream which emanates from the marshy ground that was reclaimed for trout pools a century ago runs along the north

side of Nook Road until, passing under Route 3A, it makes its way through the Hobshole Meadow saltmarsh into Plymouth harbor. Nevertheless, less than a century ago there were two mills using the tiny brook on either side of Sandwich St. The Manter and Blackmer Hammer Works, which manufactured steel shanks for shoes, hammers and other iron articles, was on the northern corner of Nook Lane. The plant is shown on the 1857 H. F. Walling map as the "Plymouth Iron Foundry" and presumably existed before then. The demand for the steel inner shanks for boots and shoes in the Civil War period was perhaps a factor in its establishment. Manter and Blackmer continued in operation until about 1895, and they apparently had a branch operation on the upper floor of the Morton Grist Mill on Town Brook as well. On the east side of the street, where the power substation is now, stood the Plymouth Straw Works. The factory was owned by H.M. Ryder and made straw hats. It began operation in 1885, and closed before 1895. The Manter and Blackmer building was not reused, but in 1906 the Ryder building was occupied by the short-lived Standard Game and Toy Company. Both of the sites were empty of buildings by 1912.

The other Plymouth business that depended on running water, although not in the traditional manner, was trout raising. The first hatchery was founded in 1869 on Russell Mills Pond by Walter Gilbert. Additional pools were created on Eel River, and at the southerly end of Poor House Pond on Town Brook. In 1894, the Plymouth Rock Trout Company was started at the headwaters of Hobs Hole Brook by the sons of tin manufacturer Nathaniel Wood. Using the pools, which are still in business today, both eggs and fish were profitably produced and shipped to people stocking brooks, or for consumption in hotels and markets.

Eel River and its southern tributary, Shingle Brook, were second only to Town Brook in the number and variety of industries that they supported over the years. Interest in the economic possibilities of the river began as early as 1701 when Elder Thomas Faunce headed up an effort to induce a greater number of alewives to spawn by digging a watercourse connecting the headwaters of the river to Great South pond. Although the watercourse was dug, the fish were not impressed. While this effort was unsuccessful, other attempts to capitalize on Eel River were. There apparently was a grist mill about where Shingle (or Double) Brook passes under Sandwich Road at an early date. The first industry to exploit the swift waters of the river was a cotton mill built in



1812 where Eel River passes under Sandwich Road. Reorganized in 1844 as the "Plymouth Cotton and Woolen Company," the factory produced cotton thread and cotton duck canvas stamped with the "Old Colony" brand. In 1874 the mill produced 300,000 yards of duck for yacht and schooner sails, the latter being produced in the standard 22 inch width, while the former was available in widths from 9 to 18 inches. The duck found a ready market in the age of sail, and the mill was often referred to as the "Old Colony factory" from its famous brand. It is best known, however, as the Hayden Mill from the name of its manager at the end of the century, Edward B. Hayden. Sails were produced for many vessels, including racing yachts such as the "Puritan," the "Mayflower," and the "America," which was launched in 1851 and won the first America's Cup using "Old Colony" canvas from the Eel River mill.

The six-story tall yellow mill, which employed 65 people in 1835, was largely staffed by women who tended the 2000 spindles in the spinning lofts (although men ran the 40 looms on the lower floors) and lodging was provided for them around what is now known as "Forges' Green." In the early years most of the weaving had been farmed out to private looms with thread supplied by the mill. The finished cloth was returned for processing at the mill before it was shipped from Plymouth harbor or the Old Colony Railroad. Victoria Engstrom records the fact that the raw cotton was brought to the mill in "land barges," large wagons pulled by four horses. The Hayden mill closed in 1897 after Mr. Hayden's death, and was destroyed by arson on July 3, 1913.

The next industry to exploit the Eel River was Nathaniel Russell & Co., which erected a granite rolling and slitting mill at the dam next upstream from the Hayden Mill in 1827. This mill acted in cooperation with the company mills on Town Brook in the manufacture of nails, barrel hoops and the like. In 1855 the Russell mill site was sold to the Russell Mills Corporation, which replaced the old iron works with a new mill of brick for the production of cotton products. In 1873 the cotton mill employed 100 persons and processed 2,500 pounds of raw cotton each day, using 52 looms, 50 carding machines and 28 spinners. Southern competition put the Russell Mills cotton duck factory out of business in 1897 (some of the machinery going to Georgia), and the mill was transformed into the Columbia Rubber Company by the Boston Woven Hose and Rubber Company, which also acquired the Hayden site as a source of power and some operations. Victo-

ria Engstrom notes that some cotton manufacturing continued on the upper floors of the Hayden mill even after the rubber processing began on the lower levels. The Boston Woven Hose and Rubber operation closed in 1929 and the Russell Mills buildings burned down in 1937. There were in addition smaller factories further upstream above Russell Mills Pond, including a barrel stave mill built by Samuel Bradford in the 1830s located on the 1857 Walling map at the western end of Russell Mills Pond, and a cotton batting mill further upstream close to the Long Pond Road.

Shingle or Double Brook was formed by the juncture of three brooks, which when they were dammed formed Forge or Forges' Pond. The brook ran from the pond under Sandwich Road and then under Jordan Road to connect with Eel River. It was at the easterly outflow from Forges Pond that a nail factory was built around 1830. In 1850 it was bought by Oliver Edes and Nathaniel Wood who moved their zinc operations there from Town Brook. They manufactured zinc shoe nails, rivets and other items there, employing one of the earliest zinc rolling mills in the country. In 1858 the partnership was dissolved, with the Edes Company retaining the Forges' Pond mill while N. Wood & Sons built another zinc mill just down the brook. The Edes Company, which had bought its own zinc mines in Virginia in 1879, found an even more profitable line in the manufacture of zinc battery plates in 1889. It moved once again in 1892 to a site on the Plymouth waterfront near the railway yard, where the Revere Copper and Brass Company used their old buildings after 1959. N. Wood & Sons, which had been smelting and rolling zinc plates at the Shingle Brook site and then sending them down to their shop on Town Brook for slitting before they were shipped to Boston to be made into nails and rivets, had closed earlier following the elder Wood's death. Both the Forges' Pond and the Shingle Brook mill sites were sold to Eben Jordan of Jordan Marsh and Company for his horse farm at about that time. Further down the brook another rivet mill was in operation in 1821 and doing well in the 1830s under the management of local inventor Timothy Allen, who patented a very early rivet machine in 1826 (apparently the one Oliver Edes would later improve upon). There was also a sash and blind manufacturing plant on the brook in 1857 where it passes under Jordan Road. Another small manufactory somewhere on the Eel River was the Morton Thimble factory which made the elliptical metal pieces which are fitted into the eye-splices of ropes and cables.



in 1898. There was another cotton thread factory at the "Manomet Ponds" mentioned as early as 1815 by Samuel Davis and referred to again by James Thatcher in 1832, which had about 300 spindles producing about 50 pounds of coarse warp each day for use as cod and mackerel lines. There was also a barrel stave works on the Agawam River on the west side of the Agawam Road across from the residence of M.N. Pierce at the southerly extremity of the town in 1857.

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**Next Issue (September, 1996) :** Plymouth Business IV, another Presidential bio, and more?

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# OLD COLONY CLUB QUARTERLY

Old Colony Club Quarterly September, 1996. Ser. 1, No. 20

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## NEWS AND NOTES

In this issue we continue with our Past Presidents, and the concluding part of Plymouth Business...

### PAST PRESIDENTS' COLUMN

#### **Plymouth Industrializes IV: The Plymouth Waterfront**

The need for water power, or for water to process products such as rubber dictated that most of the early mills would be located on Plymouth's streams. However by the end of the 19th century steam, gas and electrical power became the preferred sources of energy, and the need for easy transport of raw materials and finished products became a more important consideration. The seven Water St. wharfs and the Old Colony Railroad made the Plymouth waterfront the most attractive site for new industries from the middle of the 19th century. The waterfront was also the location of the town's new energy resources. The first was the Plymouth Gaslight Company, founded in 1854. It was located on the southerly side of Howland St., and charged 15 cents a foot to outfit a house with a supply of gas for lighting, and later, for heating. It was calculated in the *Old Colony Memorial* (Jan. 8, 1859) that coal gas was cheaper than kerosene, whale oil or other fuels for lighting (once the installation was complete). The first use of electrical power occurred at the Seamless Pocket Company in the Armory/Rink on Town Brook. A modest dynamo was installed by the company on June 10, 1885, by which it could light its own operations and perhaps sell power for a few lights on Main St. In 1887, the new Plymouth Electric Light Company built an independent station behind the then Baptist Church east of the Armory, before the company was sold to the Thompson-Houston Electric Company (the forerunner of General Electric) in 1889, which in turn built the brick power station on the corner of Leyden and Water Sts. in 1892/93. The Plymouth Electric Company maintained this building until it was torn down around 1969 and the entrance to Brewster Gardens freed from encumbrance.

Another electrical power station on Water St. was owned by the Plymouth and Kingston Street

Railway Company and located about where the entrance to the State Wharf is today. It provided power for the street cars as they made their way from Kingston to Manomet. Equipment in the station included four 125 h.p. horizontal return boilers, a 300 kw. three-phase alternator connected to a 450 horizontal cross-compounding condensing engine, a 300 Kw. 550-volt DC generator driven by a 450 hp condensing engine, a 200 Kw. 500-volt Dc generator connected to a 250 h.p. engine, and other units. The company began service in 1889 and also rebuilt the old Clifford House as the Hotel Pilgrim, which in 1893 marked the end of the line. Service was later extended along Rocky Hill Road to Manomet beyond White Horse Beach. It was absorbed into the larger Brocton & Plymouth Street Railway Company which ceased operations in 1928. The power plant was torn down in 1920 in preparation for the 1921 Pilgrim Tercentenary. Another element of modern technology, the telephone, first arrived in Plymouth on Leyden St. in 1877.

The waterfront was a center for commerce and transportation, but the dominance of shipping passed to the railroad after the Civil War. Some industries such as the Robinson Iron Works and the Plymouth Cordage Company continued to use their own schooners to import coal, ore, hemp and other supplies by sea, but from 1845 other industries began to use the Old Colony Railroad. One such mill was the Plymouth Woolen Mills, founded in 1863 by Dwight Faulkner. It was located just west of the railway yard at the foot of Phoenix Court, where the Sheraton Hotel and its parking lots are today. Plymouth Woolen made mostly flannel suiting cloth during the early years. It was sold to Sawyer and Douglas of Franklin Falls, N.H. in 1879, who considerably enlarged the facility in 1890, and who later sold it in turn to W.W. Wood, founder of the new American Woolen Company around 1900. The Puritan Mills, as the Plymouth facility was then called, prospered during World War One by concentrating on the explosive need for woolen service uniforms and blankets. It continued to enjoy a high volume of orders for suitings and flannels into the early 1920s, but business sharply declined thereafter. The mill found itself unable to compete once the government con-

tracts dried up, and in 1926, discouraged by the downturn, Mr. Wood committed suicide. Puritan Mills continued to operate in a depressed condition until it closed in 1955.

The Old Colony Railroad, which attracted these businesses, was founded in 1844 and opened in November, 1845, with the Plymouth Station at the end of the line located where the Citizens Bank is today, and Seaside (North Plymouth) Station just about on the boundary between Plymouth and Kingston at the northerly end of the Plymouth Cordage Company. To entice visitors to Plymouth, the railroad also built the Samoset House, a large and for the time luxurious hotel on the corner of Samoset St. and Court (where Papa Gino's is today, the Gulf Station being on the site of the hotel's spacious front lawn), which became a major meeting and dining establishment until it burned down in 1939. In the early years, the train burned more wood than coal, and the need for considerable supplies had some effect on the local woodlots. Pictures of the town in the mid-19th century show the general absence of trees (except for decorative street trees and orchards) in the face of the need for wood for home fuel, for business use and for the railway. Local wood, bought by George Adams of Kingston for the railroad, was stored on the corner of Court and South Park Ave, where the "Brick Block" is today. In 1849, for example, the railway bought 8,254 cords of wood at a cost of \$44127.87, 5,116 cords of which were bought in and around Plymouth.

The Old Colony Railroad was "one of the most profitable short lines in the country" (Morison, *Ropemakers of Plymouth*, p.52), and soon opened other lines south of Boston: "Between the years 1854 and 1892, the Fall River and Newport, the Cape Cod, the South Shore, the Duxbury and Cohasset, the Providence, the Bridgewater, the Middleboro and Taunton, the Easton and Fall River and the Raynham and Taunton branches were added." (*Old Colony Memorial* suppl. 7/13/1972). The Old Colony Line was bought up by the New York, Hew Haven and Hartford Railroad in 1893, the year a second line from Plymouth was opened that went to Middleboro, crossing Court St. about where the Standish Plaza is today and stopping at Darby (West Plymouth) Station before entering Carver. Plymouth received a new stationhouse in 1905. However, once the mills shut down and the automobile triumphed, the traffic on the line decreased to an uneconomic level. The last passenger trains left Plymouth on June 30, 1959, and the south-

ern end of the station was turned into a branch of the A&P shortly after in 1961.

Another mill even more closely associated with the railroad was the Emory Shoe factory, which was built in on North Park Avenue where the Richard's Wine & Spirits and the Rockland Trust office is today. The land was donated by the Old Colony Railroad in 1873 and the town raised money by subscription to build a large four story factory to attract a shoe company to Plymouth. The offer was accepted by the F. Jones & Co., but the company moved away again after two years, selling the property (in the family) to the Francis F. Emory Co. in 1875. Production ceased in 1899 when the Emory Company moved to Brocton, and no one took their place.

Almost across the street from the Emory factory, where Price Point and the Ming Dynasty restaurant are today another factory was occupied by a series of business ventures. In 1891, the site was occupied by the Plymouth Preserving Company, a cranberry canner. By 1896, a branch of Chandler's Livery Stable occupied the site, in addition to their primary location on Middle St. By 1912, the site was occupied by the Bradley, Ricker Co., which manufactured carpets. The Bradley Company expanded by 1919 and occupied a much larger building than any of its predecessors. However, by 1926, the rug company was sharing its premises with the Gurnet Worsted Company and the Plymouth Yarn Company, and by 1943 the site had been given over to use as a bowling alley which it remained until it was renovated for the restaurant and other uses.

Just east of the quickly changing site just described was the Ripley & Bartlett Tack Factory, where Al's Pizza is now. Founded in 1879 over the Plymouth Mills machine shop on Town Brook, Ripley & Bartlett moved to their waterfront site the following year. Ripley & Bartlett remained a private firm which manufactured all sorts of tacks, as their advertisement in the 1887 Plymouth Directory reports: "...manufacturers of Iron, Zinc, Copper and Brass Countersunk and oval head nails, Miners' Tacks, Hungarian and Hob Nails, Shoe Tacks, Upholsterer's Tacks, Card, Swedes and American Tacks, Trunk and Clout Nails, Brush, Gimp & Lace Tacks, Blued and Polished Carpet Tacks, Channel, Cigar Box & Chair Nails". The company made their name, so the story goes, by sending their business address out stuffed inside every box of tacks or nails sold and soon had a repu-

tation for superior products. The company expanded in the 1920s and survived strong competition in the following decade to outlast all of the other tack factories in town, before it closed.

Another waterfront success was the Edes Manufacturing Company, which set up shop off Loring Street behind the Plymouth Beef Company (later taken over by Amour and Company) after moving from Shingle Brook in 1892. The company had done well with its electrical components, engraving plates and bronze souvenir casts of Forefathers Monument and other Pilgrim icons. It continued in operation until it was sold to Revere Copper and Brass in 1959. To the east of the Edes company, after Water St. was opened and its route decided upon, a building later nicknamed the "Clam Factory" was erected at some point in the 1920s as a canning plant, which was eventually taken over by Ocean Spray and incorporated into its waterfront headquarters. It was built on or near the site where the C.E. Taylor Wooden Box factory was in 1912. In 1927 the plant, identified as the Puritan Canning Company, was already out of operation and vacant. Presumably it had been a clam chlorination and canning operation, as there was a brief efflorescence of the clamming trade in Plymouth in the years around World War One. A guide to New England from 1916 states:

1000 acres of flats in the harbor are now planted with clams. Nothing of the product is wasted. The clams are graded as carefully as Western apples; the shells are used for poultry-feeding and road-making, and the canning business furnished clam bouillon as a by-product. By this economic handling a profit of \$500 - \$700 an acre is readily obtainable.

Those flats had been largely barren in 1910, and may have become so again. There was an earlier clam canning plant, the Andrew Kerr Company, on the Craig wharf just north of the present State Pier. Unfortunately, a typhoid outbreak associated with clams and water pollution in 1925 brought a decline to this promising business. The Puritan Canning plant was owned by the National Cranberry Company in 1943, and was later bought by the United Shoe Machinery Corporation in the 1950s.

The other major industry located on the waterfront was the George P. Mabbett & Sons Woolen Company. Mabbett had been employed by the Standish Worsted Company before retiring in 1899 and founding George Mabbett & Sons in 1900 on Water St. between Chilton St. and

Howland St., where the Plymouth Rock Boot & Shoe company was previously. Mabbett's believed strongly in quality and while the mill prospered during World War One, it closed down for a time rather than accept the shoddy dyes being supplied at the time. After 1918 the company dedicated its production to the finest quality worsted for men's suits and unlike the nearby Puritan Mills, which had difficulty in the competitive civilian market, Mabbett's prospered, expanding its facilities in 1921 and again in 1926. It also kept up to date with the latest technology, installing automatic looms between 1925 and 1930. In 1940 the firm employed about 300 workers, some of which were seasonal. Mabbett's continued in operation after the other woolen mills closed, weathering the notorious Goldfine scandal of the Eisenhower years. Bernard Goldfine, who owned many woolen mills, was cited by Congress as being guilty of paying Eisenhower's Presidential Assistant, Sherman Adams, for hotel bills and a vicuna coat, among other things. Mabbett's finally closed in the early 1960s.

In addition to Mabbett's, Water St. was the location of several short-lived businesses before the turn of the century. The Atlantic Covering Company made magnet wire in 1890 in a building where the Plymouth Antiquarian Society's Hedge House is today. The Hedge House was moved from the lot on Court St. where Memorial Hall is now. Further south, where the Governor Bradford Motel is today, P.I. Hershey's Shoe Manufactory was located in 1896, and in 1919, Mabbett's built a brick building as an extension of their business.

Another waterfront industry not near the town center was the Hedge brickyard, which was located on the shore near High Cliff in North Plymouth. Plymouth has a fine quality gray clay in various areas which made very good bricks, and in the mid-18th century Barnabus Hedge started a brick yard using the local clay. The brickyard remained in the family until it was closed in 1897 by the first Barnabus' grandson, Barnabus. Among the Plymouth buildings built with Hedge bricks was the Russell Building at 17 Court St. (1898) which had bricks marked "B. Hedge" and "I.L.Hedge" (Isaac Lothrop Hedge, who managed the yard in the final years) in its walls.



**Plymouth Moves On:****Cranberries and Tourists**

Another factor besides labor, materials and water power which was necessary for the of the mills and factories was investment and finance. The first bank in the town was the Plymouth Bank, founded in June, 1803, with \$100,000 capital supplied by local merchants, and originally located in an old building where the Russell Building is today at Court St. Other banks followed, including the Plymouth Savings Bank (1828), the Old Colony Bank (1832), and the Plymouth Five Cents Savings (1855). Plymouth also had its own insurance companies; the Plymouth County Mutual Fire Insurance Company (1828) and the Old Colony Insurance Company (1835). Plymouth Savings is still in the building it built in 1888 at 36 Main St., which was also occupied by the Old Colony Savings Bank before it was consolidated into the Plymouth National Bank in 1934. The Plymouth Bank, which added "National" to its name in 1865 after the National Bank Act was passed, the Five Cents Savings Bank, and Plymouth Mutual Insurance were located in the Bank Building at 44 Main St. (built in 1841). The Plymouth National Bank moved to a new building at 58 Main St. (later taken down for the extension of the Puritan Clothing Company) in 1929, and then moved the old First National building on Shirley Square in 1965. The Plymouth National merged with the Brocton Home National Bank in 1963 and was eventually absorbed by the Bank of New England before that bank failed and was succeeded by the Fleet Bank. The Five Cents Savings Bank moved to a new building on the site of the old railway station in 1978, before it failed and was replaced by the Citizens' Bank.

Another Plymouth industry which did not function in mills and factories was the cranberry business, which was first recorded in 1855 when there was only one and one-half acres of bog altogether in the town, worth \$15. By 1885, Plymouth County had 1,347 acres of cranberry bog under cultivation, and in 1886 over 1,400 barrels of cranberries were shipped from Plymouth, and within a few years the cranberry business grew tremendously. In 1888, the (second) Cape Cod Cranberry Growers' Association was founded with John J. Russell of the Plymouth Savings Bank as President. By 1901 there were 13 cranberry growers listed in the town directory:

|                             |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Le Baron Barker             | Long Pond |
| Beaver Dam Cranberry Bog Co |           |
|                             | Manomet   |

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Alonzo L. Blackmer    | 210 Sandwich St. |
| Arthur L. Briggs      | Manomet Bluffs   |
| George R. Briggs      | Indian Brook     |
| S. Mendall Briggs     | Manomet Bluffs   |
| W.L. Gilbert          | Chiltonville     |
| A. M. Haskell         | Cedarville       |
| W.B. Hatch            | Ship Pond        |
| Manomet Cranberry Co. | Manomet Ave.     |
| Ezra Pierce           | Ship Pond        |
| William C. Snell      | Beaver Dam Rd.   |
| Alonzo Warren         | South Pond       |

In 1905 the Massachusetts cranberry acreage was 6,240, of which 47.8 percent were in Plymouth County; Plymouth bogs equalling 984 acres valued at \$393,600. By 1915 Plymouth County had over 9,000 acres for cranberry growing which was 61 per cent of the state's acreage, with 600 acres in Plymouth itself, surpassing even Barnstable County's bog area.

The other industry which that Plymouth has long been known for, and which like trout or the cranberry does not require mills and factories, is tourism. The town's unique heritage makes this business a natural resource for income, for, as was once said about the island of Malta, there is more history here than can be consumed locally. Modern pilgrims have been coming to Plymouth for generations to see where New England began and to try to conjure up the well known scenes of the Landing, the First Winter and the First Thanksgiving.

There is even a candidate for the First Tourist; Samuel Sewall, a Boston magistrate best known for his role in the infamous Salem witch trials, for which he made a public confession of repentance. In his detailed diary we have a rare glimpse into the human side of the Pilgrim century. Sewall had a thorough reverence for the age and honor of the town, and exhibited a very tourist-like interest in linking his experience with that of the Forefathers. In 1698, after Sewall was appointed to preside over the circuit court in Plymouth on a rotating basis, he stayed at the major inn, Cole's Ordinary, which he tells us had been Edward Winslow's house and was the oldest in Plymouth. This house was located on Leyden St. just east of the old Post Office. On his first visit to Plymouth, he walked out in the morning and visited the (Jenney) grist mill, turned up the lane to Burial Hill and came down by the Meetinghouse, tracing a route over which thousands of tourists would follow after him. In 1702, he was gratified to meet Isaac Robinson, son of the Pilgrims' pastor, "But to my disap-

pointment he came not to New England till the year [1631]..." This interest in the first immigrants foreshadows the later emphasis on the Old Comers (who came before 1624) and eventually the narrower focus on the Mayflower company.

However, only the literate and leisured few followed Sewall to Plymouth over the next century or so. The primary recognition of the Plymouth colonists occurred in the various histories of the region such as Nathaniel Morton's *New England's Memorial* (1669), Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702) and Thomas Prince's *Chronological History of New England* (1736). Nothing immediately apparent survived from the first period of settlement, and no monuments or markers existed before the mid 19th century. The centennial year of 1720 apparently passed with out special notice. The Pilgrims, or "the Forefathers", as they were known before the term "Pilgrim Fathers" came in to use at the end of the 18th century, were honored on a local basis as the founders of the town, and recognized regionally as the first New Englanders. The key to the interest in the virtuous and humble Plymouth Forefathers or Pilgrims was their adoption by the New England intelligentsia as everyone's honorary forebears. "Forefathers" has a local connotation—every American town has its founders and forefathers. The term "Pilgrim Fathers", on the other hand, was more general. The Pilgrims, while not one's own forefathers, could be honored by non-Plymouthans as the founders of New England, and by extension, Anglo-America in general.

Plymouth's career as a historic shrine and place of pilgrimage began in earnest when the commemoration of the Pilgrims went beyond the text and the sermon. The first step was the establishment by the Old Colony Club of "Old Colony" or "Forefathers' Day" in 1769, a holiday celebrating the arrival of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, one of the earliest purely American holidays (Thanksgiving for example having European Protestant antecedents). The date selected, December 22, marked the supposed anniversary of the landing of the exploring party from the Mayflower on a prominent rock below Cole's Hill. It had been identified in 1741 by Elder Thomas Faunce as where the colonists first set foot on the Plymouth shore. Faunce's identification had not been recorded at the time, but was related to the club members by Deacon Ephraim Spooner who had been present when Faunce pointed out the rock. Forefathers' Day not only increased

interest in the Pilgrims but was also responsible for the elevation of the rock to canonical status as Forefathers' or Plymouth Rock.

In 1774, amid the tensions preceding the Revolution, the Plymouth patriots chose the Rock as a symbol to increase revolutionary fervor. They took the boulder, or rather the upper half of it, to Town Square and placed it next to a Liberty Pole which had been erected on the southeasterly corner of the square. The Rock therefore became the primary focus for anyone interested in the Pilgrims, and this interest spread throughout the region, and beyond in the early days of the Republic. De Tocqueville mentioned in 1839 that he had seen treasured pieces of Plymouth Rock in a number of American towns. The most effective manner by which the Pilgrim Story was spread was through books, but the Rock and Forefathers' Day observations were an important vehicle as well, as was the representation of the Pilgrims in art. Forefathers' Day was observed not only by the Club but the town as a whole, and after the club disbanded, the town continued the tradition. There was regular coverage of the celebration in the Boston newspapers. In 1797, the holiday was adopted by the "Sons of the Pilgrims" in Boston (where that term originated), and in 1805, the New England Society of New York introduced Forefathers' Day there as well, and it was first observed in Charleston, NC, in 1819, where it continued even during the Civil War. In art, the first attempt to represent the Pilgrims was a small engraving made by Samuel Hall of Boston in 1799 for a Sons of the Pilgrims Forefathers' Day dinner invitation. This little illustration was copied in many forms, from Chinese paintings on glass to oil paintings and even on souvenir dishes in the 1820s. All of this publicity inspired visitors to come to Plymouth.

In 1820 the new Pilgrim Society took over the observation of Forefathers' Day in Plymouth, and erected Pilgrim Hall in 1824 as a meeting place and museum for people interested in the Pilgrims. Their 1820 Forefathers' Day celebration was the largest to that date, and included guests from Boston and beyond. The meeting was addressed by the president of Harvard, and a young lawyer named Daniel Webster. It was still difficult to get to Plymouth in 1820, although the Boston to Plymouth stage coach service had begun in 1796, and there were regular packet boats to the city as well. Also once people arrived in Plymouth, the only places to stay were the spartan inns that had been catering mostly

to business and governmental travelers since Pilgrim times. Ordinaries (inns) such as Cole's, which was east of the old post office on Leyden St., and Shurtleff's on the east side of Market St., which welcomed guests in the late 17th century were succeeded by Bryant's Tavern on the northern corner of Main and Middle St., and the Bunch of Grapes where the Mug and Muffin is today, in the 18th century. These institutions in turn were not much different from the taverns of the 19th century such as Ballard's Saloon (where Puritan Clothing was) or a new Bryant's on the earlier site.

The real change arrived with the railway in 1845, when the Old Colony Railroad built the up-to-date Samoset House offering rooms and meals, or Plymouth Rock House on Cole's Hill where the Plymouth National (wax) Museum is today. Now it was not only possible to reach Plymouth in a few hours in relative comfort, but also there were acceptable places for families to stay. Plymouth's first guidebook, W.S. Russell's *Guide to Plymouth and Recollections of the Pilgrims* was published in 1846. On August 1, 1853, the Pilgrim Society hosted an unprecedentedly large celebration of the Pilgrims ("Forefather's Day thawed out" as one wag put it) to announce plans for the erection of a monument to the Forefathers, and a canopy over the lower half of the Rock, the upper half having been moved for protective custody to Pilgrim Hall in 1834. A massive parade including politicians from Washington marched through decorated Plymouth streets to the Green, where a canvas pavilion was pitched, in which dinner was served to 2,500 guests. This event received national press coverage including an article in *Harpers' Monthly* and provided great PR for visitors to the town.

The continued exposure of the Pilgrim Story in print and art and several later grand celebrations in 1859 to lay the cornerstones, and 1889 for the monuments completion, and the Forefathers' Day anniversaries of 1870 and 1895, help make Plymouth a major tourist destination during the late 19th century. More hotels, such as the Hotel Pilgrim (née the Clifford House, which was renovated by the Brockton and Plymouth Street Railway in 1893) or the Columbia Pavilion on Plymouth Beach (1883), opened for business. Steam ships, which had been coming to Plymouth from time to time since 1818, established regular service with the Boston and Nantasket Line, augmenting the railroad in bringing summer visitors to town, and various

restaurants and ice cream parlors sprang up to serve them. It wasn't the Pilgrims alone which drew these visitors, for Plymouth's natural resources such as the beaches, the ponds and woodlands were also popular attractions.

A subsidiary business which flourished in this atmosphere was that of Pilgrim souvenirs. Alfred S. Burbank (1856-1946) led the way in this trade, but other merchants did so as well, such as Moore Brothers, the predecessor of Buttner's on Court St., or H.E. Washburn and C.T. Harris on Market St. Probably no one did more for the popularization of the Pilgrims than Burbank, who for 60 years operated the Pilgrim Bookstore, a book, art supply and stationary store. Burbank commissioned and sold all sorts of Pilgrim souvenirs including an illustrated Plymouth guide book which he wrote, books on the Pilgrims, Staffordshire plates with Pilgrim scenes, glass Plymouth Rock paperweights and a wide variety of Plymouth scenes on mounted photos, prints and postcards. He also mass produced reproductions of historical paintings of the Pilgrims by George H. Boughton, W.L. Williams, and other artists, which were turned out in various media.

The high point in Pilgrim celebrations was the Tercentenary of 1920-21. George P. Baker's pageant, *The Pilgrim Spirit*, employed over 1,200 Plymouth and area residents and was watched by over 100,000 visitors in August 1921, including President Warren G. Harding. The Tercentenary also inspired a number of memorials and commemorative monuments that gave the tourist something more to look at than just the Rock, Forefathers' Monument and Pilgrim Hall. These included the Pilgrim Sarcophagus where the bones found on Cole's Hill from the 1621 burials were deposited, Cyrus Dallin's statue of Massasoit (although Dallin's companion Bradford statue was not installed until 1970, and in a much reduced, economical form), Henry H. Kitson's Pilgrim Maiden (1924) and Paul Genoine's Pilgrim Mother (1925); the latter ironically appearing far more virginal than the former; two 17th cannon for Burial Hill (since removed), and a number of smaller plaques and monuments. It also saw the beginning of the Pilgrim Progress, which began as part of the 1921 events and has been carried on each Friday in August ever since, although the accompanying tableaux in Memorial Hall, which were introduced a few years later, were dropped about 1960. Thanksgiving, which became popularly associated with the Pilgrims around the turn of the century,



supplanting Forefathers' Day outside of Plymouth, also became a major draw for tourism, and the Progress was introduced into that observation as well. For many years all of the historic houses and museums handed out free cider and donuts to visitors (and the small boys of the town, who religiously made the rounds of all the houses) on Thanksgiving which were underwritten by the town, although this generosity has since ceased.

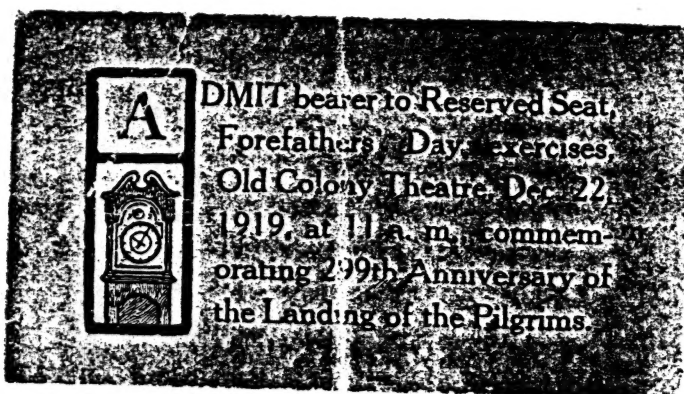
The town was often ambiguous about the demands of the tourism industry, and wavered between support and antagonism, especially after the industrial base began to decline following the 1920s. The automobile replaced the railroad as the primary conveyance to Plymouth, while the Brocton and Plymouth Street Railway ceased operations in 1928, and most of the Boston and Nantasket vessels were destroyed by fire in November, 1929. When Plymouth failed to vote funds so that the Board of Trade could operate the information booth and other services in 1939, public support for tourism was reduced to the voluntary efforts of Miss Alice S. Barnes. Miss Barnes, who operated out of the Old Chapel on Church St., acted as a general information service to 6,500 tourists a year in the early 1940s. She was able, with a pittance from the town, send 5,700 items of "Pilgrim-Plymouth literature" to 1,250 inquirers in 1940. Nevertheless, tourism continued to thrive and remain a central Plymouth industry.

The other contribution to the visitor experience were the restoration and opening for tourism of a number of old houses with Pilgrim associa-

tions. Earlier there had been several old houses pointed out in the guide books for people to look at, but the all remained private residences and several were later torn down. The Edward Winslow house on Winslow St., which was "restored" in the Colonial Revival style by Joseph E. Chandler in 1898, had been temporarily opened to the public during the 1896-7 Historical Festival and pageant to raise money for the new Unitarian Church building. It was bought by the General Society of Mayflower Descendants in 1940. The first house to be actually acquired for preservation was the Jabez Howland house on Sandwich St., which was bought by the Howland Society in 1912, but not restored by Strickland & Strickland until 1941. The Antiquarian (Lothrop/Hedge) House, which whad been displaced on Court St. by Memorial Hall was acquired by the Plymouth Antiquarian Society (founded in 1919) and opened in July, 1920. The Harlow House was bought by the Antiquarian Society in 1920 for \$3000 and opened temporarily to the public in 1920 and 1921, and following restoration work by Joseph E. Chandler in 1922, opened again the following year. The Richard Sparrow House was restored by Strickland and Strickland and opened as a museum and the Plymouth Pottery under the management of Miss Katherine Alden in 1936. The last major tourist attractions to be instituted before 1950 was Pli-moth Plantation, Inc., which opened its experimental "First House" near Plymouth Rock in 1948.

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Next Issue (December, 1996) : A Pilgrim in Paradise, another Presidential bio, and more?







## Old Colony Club Upcoming Events

There will be a open house for members and guests on **Saturday, November 23**, to view the Isaac's **Thanksgiving Parade** from the comfort of the Porch. The parade will begin at about 1:00 from the Holmes Reservation, proceed along Court Street past the Old Colony Club and turn down Water Street to end at Nelson's Field. The Club will be open from 12:30 to 3:00, and hot mulled cider and doughnuts will be served.

The **December 8th Sunday Brunch** will be held at the Clubhouse between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM on said date. All members are urged to attend, and family members are welcome. We will need a count for planning purposes, so please let the House Committee know by Thanksgiving. Committee chairman Mike Curtis can be reached at his office, at 746 - 1199.

### **Reminder: IT SHOULD BE NOTED**

that

**Forefathers' Day**  
will be on December **23rd** this year !

This is the custom for Forefathers' Days that fall on Sunday to observe the holiday on the following day, and December 22 will be on Sunday this year. We would not want to move back a day and conflict with the Pilgrim Society's "reformed" Forefathers' Day on December 22, so we will move forward to the 23rd, as was first done in 1772.

James W. Baker,  
President,  
15 November 1996